





The miracles (*thaumata*) are acts of divine grace, part of God's plan; they demonstrate Luke's role and power—both during his lifetime and after his death—as intercessor with God.<sup>141</sup>

The importance of a document such as the Vita for the flourishing of a cult should not be underestimated. Also important to remember is that it was intended to be used—for reading aloud, not for private contemplation. The great public event of the reading of the Life at the saint's monastery on his feast day focused attention on the saint in a way that reaffirmed the beliefs, values, and conduct of all present. This event is described for the monastery where St. Peter of Atroa was buried in the mid-ninth century; in the *Posthumous Miracles*, St. Peter's biographer, the monk Sabas, is himself the beneficiary of a miracle taking place at this event:

It happened that I was there at the monastery one day for the commemoration of the saint, kissing the slab [*plaka*] covering his tomb—the slab was thin and without a trace of humidity—I awaited the gushing forth [*anahlinis*] of another Siloam. And here, during Orthros, as the marvelous Life of the saint was being read to all the assembled crowd, suddenly the flow gushed forth, and the crowd, sensing the [saint's] presence, anointed their faces fervently. And I was among them when the wound I had on one of my legs was healed after I had anointed it.<sup>145</sup>

The Vita of Holy Luke provides our best witness to the healing practices and to the local appeal of the cult associated with the tomb, while its own liturgical use—its reading on the feast day of the saint—becomes even more vivid.

The crypt at Hosios Loukas was, as the burial place of the founder, Holy Luke, the center of his cult. As the burial place of the founder, the crypt served as his place of commemoration and also served funerary and commemorative needs of the monastic community. The architecture of the crypt bears comparison with other church substructures and although crypts are rare, those that survive probably functioned similarly. The typika bear witness to these liturgical practices, a communion of ancient Palestinian traditions of commemoration of holy men on their tombs. Further valuable evidence of how the crypt was functioned for the cult of the saint, Vita of Holy Luke, the crypt served as a center for healing and incubation practices. The reading of the *Vita* of Holy Luke, his monastery on his feast day was an important event for his cult and contributed to its flourishing. The typika expressed not only a mode of conduct but the personal beliefs and hopes of those prepared to experience the intercessory power of the saint through his miracles. In a description in his *Vita* Holy Luke is observed praying

And whenever he sent up a prayer to God his feet seemed not to touch the ground, but stood away from the earth as if by one cubit [*hasel pechon ena*].<sup>147</sup>

A similar vision of the saint levitating must also have entered the minds and imaginations of those suppliants who prayed in the crypt of the monastery, intent on seeing him in their dreams.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Cyril of Skythopolis on St. Sabas: on contemplating the coffin of the holy man, he says: "he was endowed with a great power of intercession with God [*pros theon parresias*]" (Schwartz, *Kyrillos von Skythopolis*, p. 184, line 20). On this important quality, see Patlagean, "Sainteté et pouvoir," p. 96, and P. Brown, "Iconoclastic Controversy," pp. 268-69 and n. 83.

<sup>104</sup> In the miracles, *philanthropia* is mentioned in connection with Pangratius, a leader among the monks, and of the "fathers" as a group to describe various forms of aid they provided, including anointing of the sick and sympathy and encouragement in their troubles; see chart, col. 10.

<sup>140</sup> Laurent, *Saint Pierre d'Atroa*, p. 148, sec. 98: Ἐγέρετο γὰρ με ἐν μᾶ αὐτόθι διὰ τῆς τοῦ παυλοῦ

[illegible]

<sup>100</sup> In Luke's first miracle, a paralyzed woman is brought "to the new Sichoam—the tomb of the blessed Luke [*grai ton neen Silham ton toa makarios Louka phouos taphon*]." The waters of Sichoam are mentioned frequently in the Bible: Isa. 36 makes them the symbol of the gentle, beneficent, and unobtrusive power of God. John suggests a connection between Sichoam,

meaning "sent," and Christ who was sent by the Father to bring salvation to the world (Jn. 3:17; 8:42; 17:3). Also in John is the association of "the rivers of living water" with the sending of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:2, 37-39). Siloam is alluded to in other miracle accounts: in Sophronius's Miracles of Cyrus and John (no. 46, Marcos); when a church was built over the pool in the fifth century by Eudokia (see Festagiere, *Mosque of the Holy Sepulchre*, p. 212), who



HOSIOS LOUKAS is an extraordinarily lavish monastic foundation by any standard. Compared with surviving urban or provincial monastic complexes it represents a very large investment, particularly in the churches and in their sculptural and wall decoration. The complexity and quality of the mosaics of the Katholikon as well as the fresco decoration of the crypt indicate that the most sophisticated and highly trained craftsmen were responsible. And these craftsmen and their precious materials must have been brought to this remote area at considerable expense. How can we account for this?

### SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS FACTORS

Monastic World: The Religious Vocation," in *The Byzantine World* (New York, 1961), pp. 114-19.

One important role of monks and monasteries was philanthropy: care and healing of the sick. However, miraculous healing by relics is sometimes difficult to distinguish from medical cures in hospitals run by the monasteries. The miraculous cures at the shrines of "medical saints" such as the *myrroto*, Cosmas and Damian, are well documented; in this case the entire church, the Kosmodon in Constantinople, served as a gathering place for the sick.<sup>1</sup> Living saints and holy men often had divine powers of healing. Theodore of Sykeon, for example, exorcised demons or healed through a command or touch. The relics of holy men retained the power they had when alive and healed those visiting their tombs.<sup>2</sup>

In the middle Byzantine period the Macedonian house is known to have removed hospitals, Romanus Lecapenus founded the Myrelean monastery, which had a hospital famous for its treatments.<sup>8</sup> Basil II was a founder of hospitals and other philanthropic institutions.<sup>9</sup> The best-known Byzantine hospital of the Comnenian period was that at the Pantocrator monastery in Constantinople where a variety of ailments were treated by a staff that included many categories of physicians and nurses.<sup>10</sup> The operation, or

<sup>4</sup> See Magoulas, "Lives of Saints," pp. 139-42.

<sup>2</sup> See Dawes and Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints*, p. 91, for Theodore's healing methods; exorcism of demons was another type of healing associated with holy men and shrines: Brown, "Learning and Imagination," pp. 18-19.

\* See Charanis, "Some Aspects," p. 67.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 68; Charanis, "The Monk," p. 82; Kaldan and Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, pp. 156-57.

\* Philipsborn, "Fortschritt," pp. 341-42, on the first hospitals in Cappadocia founded by Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, see Müller, *Birth of the Hospital*, pp. 61, 85.

<sup>1</sup> Philipsboen, "Fortschritt," p. 146. Festugière, *Moines de Palestine*, 3, no. 2: 43, 114, 140. Cyril of Skythopolis also records the cure by Abramius of the sick: Schwartz, *Kyriillos von Skythopolis*, p. 247. M...



least the ideal operation, of this hospital is known in detail from the founder's *typon* drawn up by the emperor John Comnenus in 1136, and further evidence of hospitals and healers associated with monasteries appears in other documents, among which are the *Vitae* of Byzantine saints.

Many monastic hospitals were highly organized, although it is not clear to what extent monks became trained as physicians or therapists to carry out the necessary services in them.<sup>12</sup> The *Vita* of Hosios Loukas makes it clear that healing is the principal association with the saint after his death; he is a *thaumaturgos*, or wonderworker, and the most numerous examples of his powers are miracles of healing. In the *Vita*, accounts of fifteen posthumous healing miracles conclude the text read annually on his feast day.<sup>13</sup> The operation of this healing cult has been discussed in Chapter II and the miracles are listed in a chart presented in Chapter II. Most of the miracles took place near the tomb of the saint, but there is reason to think that healing took place not only through miraculous means. References to the long time periods spent at the monastery by some of the sick—we know that one stayed six months—and in particular to the role of the monks in caring for the sick suggest there was quasi-medical care provided by the monks of Hosios Loukas.<sup>14</sup>

The monk *Pancratius*, mentioned several times in the *Vita*, was the central figure in the first healing cult and was perhaps even a skilled physical therapist and social worker:

The brother *Pancratius* anointed him with his own hands; for it was his custom always to sympathize with this one and with others who were similarly afflicted, and to be a supporting and charitable right hand for them.<sup>15</sup>

The renovation of the monastery after the saint's death involved the building of "houses for the reception of visitors," and the visitors included not only ordinary pilgrims but also the sick in need of care or therapy who are described in the *Posthumous Miracles*.<sup>16</sup> Although there is no archaeological evidence for a hospital, a group of these "houses for the reception of visitors" may have served such a purpose.

Healing shrines often existed alongside medical hospitals, both of which were closely associated with monasteries from earliest times. Penalties were imposed in the case of monastic establishments that did not properly perform their care of the sick.<sup>17</sup> In remote areas of the provinces this role was a particularly vital one: for the poor it was the only way of obtaining medical treatment at all. Hosios Loukas with its miracle-working

sancti's hospital, see Cordilis, "The *Pancratius*, The Imperial Byzantine Medical Center," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 53 (1978): 339-410.

<sup>12</sup> See Charanis, "The Monk," p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> *Comnenus, Life of Saint Luke*, chaps. 68-83.

<sup>14</sup> The wealth miracle accounts *Comnenus's* cure,

which took the monastic *Comnenus*, *Life of Saint Luke*

chap. 83; the *Vita* of Holy Luke is among a group of

more particularly rich in medical services for this

group. "The rise of the Constantinopolitan Luke the

healer: Luke the Younger or *Victorinus* of the area

around Thessalonica, the *Philopaganian* *Viktor* *Metrast*

*mon*, *Religious of John*, and *Vita* of *Victorinus*, all

written around 1000, are especially rich in medical in-

formation" (Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change in Byzan-*

*tine Culture*, p. 155); see C. L. Comnenus, "A Monastic

Group: Portrait, Therapy at Hosios Loukas," in

*Tenth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference: Abstracts*

*of Papers* (Bryn Mawr, 1986), pp. 28-29.

<sup>15</sup> Miracle 100, 7 (*Comnenus, Life of Saint Luke*, chap.

7). *Pancratius* is also mentioned in chaps. 61 and 83

in the authority on cures.

<sup>16</sup> See Comnenus, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 63.

<sup>17</sup> *Constantine, Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, pp.

134, 154.

tomb, the "common good of the West," was a place of miraculous healing where the monks aided in the process and provided psychological and physical remedies for the afflicted.<sup>18</sup>

ANOTHER important role of monks and monasteries was to promote and participate in pilgrimage. Monks themselves were among the most dedicated pilgrims and they constantly moved about. Travelers visited shrines or other pilgrimage sites, most often situated within monasteries or churches, to pay homage to holy places or to seek miraculous cures. The main objective of a pilgrim was to visit the holy place, the *topos*, sometimes, to pay homage to living holy men or to the relics of deceased holy men.<sup>19</sup> The powerful attraction of pilgrimage is conveyed by the fifth-century pilgrim *Egeria* in her account of her participation and her observations at the sites she visited.<sup>20</sup> Significant Theodore of Sykeon in the sixth century had a career punctuated by a number of pilgrimages, as did Peter of Atroia; the monasteries they visited, rather as goals of pilgrimage or merely along the route, are described with a sense of grandeur and a familiar types of surroundings, havens of rest, of physical and spiritual regeneration, and of prayer.

For monks, there were three great pilgrimage centers: Jerusalem, Rome, and Constantinople.<sup>21</sup> The travels of St. Lazarus of the Galesiote, for example, take up much of his *Vita*; the chart of his itinerary shows the wide geographical range of this itinerant monk.<sup>22</sup> However, Jerusalem was the only center with which Lazarus was familiar; he never reached the others: "Rome was for him (or rather, for his biographer) a disembodied, ideal city, only to be dreamed about."<sup>23</sup> St. Nikon of Sparta, a contemporary of Holy Luke whose portrait appears in mosaic in the upper church at Hosios Loukas, took to the road as a traveler and pilgrim visiting sites and monasteries all over the eastern Mediterranean and Greece in the late tenth century.<sup>24</sup>

The location of a monastery was important in determining its accessibility to pilgrims but also the degree of contact it maintained with the rest of the world. The *Vita* of Holy Luke confirms that the monastery was near an important trade and pilgrimage route. Two monks on their way from Rome to Jerusalem first enable the young Luke, then living near the site of the present monastery at Vathy, to leave home and travel as far as Athens with them where he receives tonsure from the abbot of a monastery.<sup>25</sup> When Luke is living on Mount Ioannita on the Corinthian Gulf, he is visited by monks traveling to Rome, who bestow on him the Great Habit.<sup>26</sup> After Luke's death, the monk Kosmas traveling from Paphlagonia, on the Black Sea, to Italy passed through the region

<sup>18</sup> Comnenus, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 83.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>20</sup> The essence of this practice of making pilgrimages

from the late antique period on is summarized

by Peter Brown as a "need to achieve closeness to a

specific category of fellow-humans—the saint."

"Learning and Imagination," p. 71.

<sup>21</sup> See esp. *Egeria's Travels*, ed. J. Wilkinson (London,

1971), pp. 21-112.

<sup>22</sup> Ringrose, "Monks," p. 114; Talbot, "Monastic

Experience," p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> Sevinchen, "Constantinople from the East."

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>25</sup> See particularly in D. Sullivan's *The Life of Saint*

*Nikon* (Brooklyn, Mass., 1987), chap. 1, the life

of Nikon's conversion travels as a biologically

monastic of pilgrimage experience, chaps. 12 to 13 describe

the centers and routes of these travels.

<sup>26</sup> Comnenus, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., chap. 37.

*Provisions*, p. 721 and fig. 4 on p. 745.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 721.

<sup>29</sup> De Cordis-Louche, "Saints de Grèce," pp. 133-

134.

<sup>30</sup> See particularly in D. Sullivan's *The Life of Saint*

*Nikon* (Brooklyn, Mass., 1987), chap. 1, the life

of Nikon's conversion travels as a biologically

monastic of pilgrimage experience, chaps. 12 to 13 describe

the centers and routes of these travels.

<sup>31</sup> Comnenus, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 8.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., chap. 37.

and visited Luke's tomb at the monastery.<sup>10</sup> The Gulf of Corinth was clearly one of the sea routes between the Aegean and the Adriatic, and the Monastery of Hosios Loukas must have been a stopping point for travelers as well as a goal of pilgrimage, being located a short walk from a good harbor on the gulf.<sup>11</sup> The "crowds of believers" whom Luke prophesied on his deathbed would come to visit the place where he was buried became the anticipated pilgrims, gathered to venerate his relics, for later in the *Vita*, the author states: "Thus came to fulfillment what the blessed one had said concerning the ones coming there in large numbers [*perit en hoi auton eis plithous sunerchomenoi*]."<sup>12</sup> These pilgrims lodged in the houses built for visitors, both those who were making long journeys to visit many sites and those who lived in nearby villages and towns.<sup>13</sup>

MUNASTERIES were also concerned with providing burial and commemoration of the dead. These charitable services were performed by the *spoudaiotai* and *philopoiotai* who served the poor already in sixth-century Jerusalem and seventh-century Constantinople and were organized in urban centers around the empire.<sup>14</sup> In some cases they lived in monastic communities and in others they seem to have been free agents, performing charitable services wherever needed. Societies or guilds were formed from early times, and great monasteries such as the Stoudios and Pantocrator provided free burial and commemoration of the dead.<sup>15</sup>

For the region of Hosios Loukas there was the Confraternity of the Naupactian Women, a philanthropic burial society that existed in the second half of the eleventh century, as we learn from its preserved charter.<sup>16</sup> The confraternity included both men and women and its members circulated among monasteries from Naupactos to Daphni carrying its most valued possession, an icon of the Virgin, and holding its meetings on the first day of each month in a different church in the region. One of its principal functions was funerary:

If one of our brothers leaves this life and passes on to his eternal resting place, assembling for a procession of his remains, let us hold a funeral service with our own beeswax, if such be necessary. Moreover we shall make commemoration of him according to the custom practiced by Christians, on the third, ninth and fortieth day of his burial and on the anniversary of his demise.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 66.  
<sup>11</sup> The easiest access to the monastery was from the harbor of Antikyra at the Motechion (now destroyed): "von hier lief der Pilgerweg in einem sanft ansteigenden Tal direkt zu dem Kloster" (Kodler and Hild, *Hellas und Thessalia*, p. 97); see also the map in that publication and in Sikas, *Orthodoxen Chronikon*, opposite p. 226.

<sup>12</sup> *Comnen, Vita of Saint Luke*, chap. 67.  
<sup>13</sup> For the geographical range of those mentioned in the *Miracles*, see the chart in chapter II. In Luke's encounter with the strategos Kritikos we learn that

the general came from Constantinople to Thebes not by sea but by land, for "when he was on the way there and was approaching Larissa [in Thessaly] his ears were filled with the stories about the saint" (*Comnen, Vita of Saint Luke*, chap. 50).

<sup>14</sup> Magoulias, "Lives of Saints," pp. 133-34. See also Nesbitt and Witta, "Confraternities," p. 161 and n. 5.

<sup>15</sup> See Leroy, "Réforme Stoudite," p. 127 and n. 124; and Gautier, "Pantocrator Typikon," lines 1324-44.

<sup>16</sup> See Nesbitt and Witta, "Confraternities," p. 163.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

The members of the confraternity (mostly ecclesiastical, according to their signatures on the charter) were assured a funeral, burial, and commemorative services. They also took on the larger responsibility for the poor of the area.

The Naupactian charter also has specific implications for the history of Hosios Loukas, for among its special remembrances are those for the "all-holy late monk and abbot passage not only indicates involvement between the monastery and the wealthy Leobachoi of Thebes, but also a close affiliation of the confraternity with Hosios Loukas. I believe Theodore Leobachos has been singled out because he was the principal benefactor of Hosios Loukas and therefore an important figure in local history. The time when Theodore was abbot at Hosios Loukas does not necessarily have to coincide with the date of the founding of the confraternity, as Nesbitt and Witta assume. It is just as likely that this important figure lived twenty-five or fifty or more years earlier. A tenth-century Theodore Leobachos, a spatharokandidatos, is attested by a seal; other members of this prominent old family are mentioned in the land records of the Cadastre of Thebes—in tenth-century Theodore and our abbot Theodore cannot have been the same person.

A wealthy and titled aristocrat named Theodore is described in a funerary inscription found at the monastery of Hosios Loukas;<sup>18</sup> this person took the monastic name of Theodosios in Chapter I). This Theodosios is very likely the one whose portrait appears in the crypt; he must have been abbot at the time the Katholikon was built and decorated. If, as I propose, he had been Theodore Leobachos in his worldly life, he would indeed deserve special recognition in the Naupactian charter as the key patron and benefactor of Hosios Loukas. This connection also explains the many portraits of the two Theodosioses in the Katholikon and the crypt, for the name-saint of a church's patron would receive special attention. The correlations between different types of evidence suggest that Theodore Leobachos was the abbot and principal patron of Hosios Loukas.

Burial and commemoration of the dead were concerns of the monks of Hosios Loukas, as they were of all monks, not only for the patrons but also common people. In fact these concerns are evident in the *Vita* in connection with a murder. After a murderer confesses his crime to Holy Luke, the saint stipulates that his sincere repentance be accompanied by strict performance of the proper rites for his victim:

He encouraged him by imposing disciplinary rules that he could bear, stressing especially that he should go to the tomb of the murdered one, shed many tears there, and complete at great expense the services of the third, ninth, and fortieth day. He should make genuflections there—if possible not less than three thousand . . .<sup>19</sup>

Proper, if not free, burial and commemoration of the dead were strong concerns of the Church at this time and were the responsibility of society—of monks, of lay and religious societies, and, in short, of all pious Christians. They were prime concerns of

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 163, 169.

<sup>19</sup> Svoronos, "Cadastre," pp. 41-42, and 74, n. 4.

<sup>20</sup> See Sikas, *Orthodoxen Chronikon*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>21</sup> *Comnen, Vita of Saint Luke*, chap. 50.

the monastic community at Hosios Loukas, as seen in the uses of the crypt, in the Nau-pactus charter, and in the Vita.

PROPHECIES associated with monks and holy men played a decided role in the history of Hosios Loukas. The famous story of the widow Daniels in Theophanes Continuatus concerns a monk's prophecy about the future emperor Basil I.<sup>38</sup> The great eleventh-century philosopher and historian, Michael Psellus, scoffs at these monks with the power of prophecy, thereby confirming the strength of popular belief in their powers. As Charanis points out, "the point is that prophecies were very common, that they influenced people, and that the prophets were almost always monks."<sup>39</sup>

The ability to prophecy was the sure mark of the holy man, and instances from the Life of Holy Luke are numerous. He prophesies the Bulgarian invasion, the Slavic invasion of the Peloponnese, and the Byzantine reconquest of Crete; he even prophesies his own death.<sup>40</sup> He also has the ability not only to see future events but to see "things that were at hand but escaped notice", this includes knowledge of the hiding place of treasure in two cases and also of a gift of food intended for the saint but hidden.<sup>41</sup> If these services were lucrative, it is never made explicit, for the Vita never mentions donations to the monastery in thanks for prophecies or other services rendered to individuals. The general Krinites makes a substantial donation, but it is on account of the holy man's reputation as a miracle worker and the personal impression he creates that the strategos is inspired to make his contribution.

He [Krinites] became joined to the holy one with an affection so warm that his soul was "glued onto him." . . . Indeed he tended to his every need, and most zealously performed every service and made every expenditure, as for example in donating what was most essential for the construction of the church of the superbly victorious martyr Barbara, much money along with the work force.<sup>42</sup>

Shortly afterward, the saint prophesied the general's next post. This account represents the only written record of the initial patronage to the monastery, brought about by the general Krinites' personal contact with the saint and his prophetic and inspirational powers.

Luke's most famous prophecy concerned the victorious Byzantine campaign on the island of Crete in 961; the prophecy is recorded in chapter 60 of the Vita and will be discussed here among the military factors for the monastery's patronage.

An account follows in the Vita in which Philippus, a spatharios from Thebes, was entertained by the saint, his arrival having been prophesied by Luke. In a miraculous dream Philippus was shown that his suspicions about the saint's character were unfounded, but we are not told how the repentant spatharios made amends to the saint.<sup>43</sup>

Contact between Luke and these wealthy local dignitaries came about through his

<sup>38</sup> Charanis, "The Monk," p. 73.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chaps. 24, 60, 64.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., chaps. 23, 27, 31.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., chap. 59.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., chap. 63.

powers of insight, healing, and prophecy; such stories indicate known and probable sources of patronage for the monastery.

MONKS and holy men play one of their most crucial religious roles as intercessors with Christ, as opposed to their social ones of healing and promoting pilgrimage. The effects of this belief on individuals and institutions were felt throughout Byzantine civilization.<sup>44</sup>

The Monk's prayers thus became much more effective than the prayers of ordinary folk, and the effectiveness of a monk's prayers was often the principal reason why many laymen founded new monasteries or endowed old ones.<sup>45</sup>

Belief in this power of intercession is reflected in the reading of the diptychs during the liturgy, which underlined the responsibility of the monastic community to offer commemorative and intercessory prayers for the eternal salvation of a founder, for example. The visual form of their prayers of intercession shows monks or donors in attitudes of supplication, as in frescoes at Karabay Kileci in Cappadocia.<sup>46</sup>

The Lives of the saints demonstrate the respect of all classes for the monk or holy man who was marked as "a friend of God," as one who could mediate on any matter on behalf of his fellow Christians. Practical matters are also solved by the prayers of a holy man, as when Theodore of Sykeon brings an end to a disastrous drought.<sup>47</sup> Intercession with Christ and the saints was made possible because the monk had become one of the saints through his condition of life, his choice of an ascetic life.<sup>48</sup>

The theme of intercession is expressed in the frescoes of the crypt at Hosios Loukas, as discussed in Chapter I, in the Dossis of the apse (fig. 83), in the medallion of Christ with outstretched arms (fig. 78), and the scene of Holy Luke interceding for an unknown abbot on the west wall of the crypt (fig. 82).

Intercession is the primary concern reflected in two pairs of inscribed marble plaques on either side of the Royal Door of the Katholikon, the door from the narthex into the naos of the church. The two inscriptions read:

Thrice blessed Luke receive at the hands of Gregory, this pious work of sculpture which he has wrought encouraged by the intercessions [procheiriai], giving it for the ending and remission of sins.

O Christ grant remission of sins to me, Gregory the monk, thy servant, who wrought this marblework.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See Brown, "Holy Man," pp. 121, 126, and

Brown, "Dark Age Crisis," p. 259, on the late antique roots of this belief. "Thus the core of the holy man's power in late antique society was the belief that he was there to act as an intercessor with God.

Whether living or dead he was a favored courier in the distant empire of heaven; he had gained a 'hold-ness' to speak up successfully for his protégés before the throne of Christ."

<sup>45</sup> Charanis, "The Monk," p. 74.

<sup>46</sup> See Bradley, *Byzantine Cappadocia*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>47</sup> Dawson and Bowers, *Three Byzantine Saints*, p. 133; Theodore of Sykeon.

<sup>48</sup> "Thus someone considered himself to have become he was thought to have won his way to attract with God-given power," see Brown, "Holy Man," p. 126.

<sup>49</sup> See Schuler and Barmann, *Monastery*, p. 18, for drawings of the plaques and transcriptions and for discussion of the plaques and transcriptions and for



In hopes of intercessory prayers, the monk Gregory donated funds for the embellishment of the Katholikon. The question of who this Gregory is finds one possible explanation in the *Vita*. A friend and follower of Holy Luke who was a priest (Luke himself was not a priest) is mentioned several times, especially in his role of ministering to the saint on his deathbed and arranging his burial.<sup>10</sup> If the Gregory of the inscription is the Gregory of the *Vita*, he made his donation with special zeal for he had known the saint personally and had good reason to hope for a sympathetic response to his prayer for intercession.

The *Vita* of the saint itself also reflects this important belief in a number of passages. For example, in the epilogue to the *Life* and Miracles the author states: "we have selected for narration a few examples of his [Luke's] intercession [*parresia*] with God," and later that he hopes that "by your [Luke's] intercession [*prosbhai*], guidance, and illumination from above you save my soul and rescue it from eternal punishment."<sup>11</sup>

Just as the decoration of the crypt and the marble plaques in the Katholikon express the hope for benign intercession with God by Holy Luke and the saints in behalf of the faithful, the author of the *Vita* expresses a similar belief. He states clearly for all to hear as the work is read aloud that his work is written as a form of dedication, indicating his trust in the intercessory power of the saint.

IN THE wake of iconoclasm the role of monasteries as strongholds of orthodoxy became crucial, and in this too the role of Holy Luke and his monastery was significant. Orthodox faith was maintained in the empire through the monastic presence that also served to consolidate the immigrant populations into orthodoxy; communities of monks thereby greatly contributed to its economic and political stability. Both in the cities and in rural regions this presence became increasingly important in the middle Byzantine period.<sup>12</sup>

During the great period of territorial expansion of the empire from the end of the ninth century to 1071, the varied ethnic populations needed to be assimilated quickly.<sup>13</sup> The Church was instrumental in the Hellenization of the Slavs in Greece in the ninth century as part of the overall process of synthesis. The Greek language maintained solidly by the Church played a role in the Hellenization as well as the Christianization of the empire.<sup>14</sup>

The Chronicle of Monembasia describes the cutting off of the Balkans from the rest of the empire in the eighth and ninth centuries, but it is clear that Greeks who had fled returned, reestablishing both the language and the religion.<sup>15</sup> Monasteries in particular kept the essential elements of Byzantine society alive.<sup>16</sup> There is evidence that Greek

refugees in Italy kept the language and religion consolidated until the threat ceased and enabled them to return to Greece. The chronicle reports the results of reconquest of the "In this way the barbarians were instructed in the will and joy of God and were baptized piecemeal, rural policy of local pursuit of 'evangelization' and of reinstallation of Greek language and of Orthodoxy."<sup>17</sup>

The role of the holy man has been recorded in this time of unrest as not only helping convert the barbarians to Christianity and maintain the Christian tradition but performing numerous social roles of teacher, missionary, and physician; according to Hermin, Bishop Athanasius of Methone was responsible for converting the entire area to Christianity, whereas Peter of Argos, who became a bishop, aided his countrymen under siege from Bulgarians and Arabs.<sup>18</sup>

The *Vita* provides a glimpse of the uncertainty of the times due to successive invasions of barbarians. The saint's grandparents were forced to flee invaders more than once, and the presence of military patrols on roads resulted in mishaps for the rebellious young Loukas.<sup>19</sup> The saint himself, and later his monastery, constituted an important Christian presence in Hellas. Invasions of Saracens (Arabs) called *qasas*, then of Bulgarians (*Sklithoi*) and Hungarians (*Toukoi*) caused death and destruction for the inhabitants of the area.<sup>20</sup> Luke led bands of refugees to the island of Ampeles for refuge, when invaders were in the area, Luke signaled the people when they should flee and when to stay, thanks to his prophetic vision.<sup>21</sup> There are frequent references throughout the *Vita* to heathens or barbarians, as opposed to believers. The *Vita* demonstrates that Christianity was the binding identity of the Greeks of Hellas and that to many Holy Luke represented the power and protection of the religion.

THE monastery of Hosios Loukas played an important social and religious role in the life of the immediate area. Philanthropic undertakings provided care, both miraculous and medical, and especially help for the poor. The poor were also provided with burial and commemorative services, as the monastic community acted together with the confraternity of Naupactos. Since Hosios Loukas was on a well-traveled route between the Adriatic and Aegean seas and had a substantial volume of traffic due to its location, this kept the monastery in touch with the wider Byzantine world. Visits from governmental or ecclesiastical officials were thus a common occurrence there. That the monastery served as a refuge is dramatized in the *Vita* by the descriptions of invading barbarians.

<sup>10</sup> P. Lemerle, "La chronique impromptue dite de Monembasia," *REB* 11 (1961): 10-11.

<sup>11</sup> Hermin, "Aspects of Hellenization," p. 120. Also, Magaw in referring to ninth-century sculptures and church buildings in Greece states: "the church-building which this group attests in the main urban centers under Basil I probably reflects a further consolidation of ecclesiastical authority in connexion with renewed campaigns of evangelization, campaigns in which

foundations in rural areas, such as that at Skripou, would doubtless have played their part" ("Skripou Saints," p. 16).

<sup>12</sup> Hermin, "Aspects of Hellenization," pp. 120-24.

<sup>13</sup> Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 1, 2.

<sup>14</sup> See Dr. Constantinos, "Saints de Saint," pp. 139-48. For the Turks, see Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 30.

<sup>15</sup> See Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 30.

these translations of the inscriptions

<sup>16</sup> See Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 37, 54.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 81, 82.

<sup>18</sup> Chazanis, "The Monk," pp. 64-71.

<sup>19</sup> Chazanis, "Observations on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire," in *Proceedings of the XIII International Congress of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford,

1967), p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. Chazanis, "How Greek Was the Byzantine Empire?" *Bucknell Review* 11 (1963): 114-15.

<sup>21</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Hermin, "Aspects of Hellenization," p. 116.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

and we are assured it was through the insight and miraculous powers of the saint that it was protected. The prophetic and intercessory powers of the saint gained for the monastery renown and patronage during the saint's lifetime. Religious and social factors governing conditions of life at Hosios Loukas, known mainly through the Vita, thus correspond with documented roles and trends current at the time.

#### MILITARY AND POLITICAL FACTORS

The monastery of Hosios Loukas maintained its place in relation to the broader military and political organization of the empire. The Byzantine empire was divided into themes for military and administrative purposes in the late seventh century, and the theme of Hellas was established as the area of central Greece.<sup>51</sup> Although Thessalonica was the military and administrative center for the theme, records concerning its role and position are fragmentary. The tenth century, like the preceding centuries, was a time of unrest, and there was a constant threat of invasion of Hellas by Arabs, Bulgarians, and others. One of the most important sources on Greece in this troubled period is the Vita of Holy Luke, which describes the impact on the villagers in the area of successive waves of invaders. The implications of this military and political climate for the monastery of Hosios Loukas need to be explored, for the circumstances that led to its founding are linked to this climate.

Having been under Slav control from the late sixth century, the themes of Hellas and the Peloponnese again functioned as part of the Byzantine empire in the late eighth century.<sup>52</sup> The strategoi of these themes traditionally had an important responsibility of vigilance and military surveillance to protect themselves from attacks from all sides; raids by the Arabs on Crete, captured by them in 820, were especially threatening since swift attacks could be mounted on the villages from anywhere along the coastline. The *Taktika* of Leo VI states that it is the responsibility of the strategos to recruit his own soldiers for defensive campaigns and that these soldiers must be relatively prosperous persons who in return for military service receive exemptions from taxation.<sup>53</sup> The strategos provided over a system of resident troops whose maintenance was firmly linked with ownership of land. This institution of *strategia* was in effect in Hellas by the ninth century.<sup>54</sup>

A strong military presence was crucial to the prosperity of ninth- and tenth-century Greece.<sup>55</sup> Evidence that the area did thrive economically is provided by documents as

<sup>51</sup> The first mention of a strategos of Hellas is in A.D. 691 (see Oikonomides, *Les lettres de prières*, p. 121, for lists of administrative officials including the strategos of Hellas). See also Charanis, "Hellas," p. 175. The western themes were less prestigious than the eastern ones; the strategos of the eastern ones received their pay from the treasury, whereas the western ones raised their own pay; for the military system

of command and control, see in general "The Government and Administration of the Byzantine Empire," in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, 4, part 2 (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 17-41.

<sup>52</sup> Hurren, "Aspects of Hellenization," p. 119.

<sup>53</sup> *Loimelia, Agrarian History*, pp. 141-42.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>55</sup> Hurren, "Aspects of Hellenization," pp. 138-39.

well as surviving architectural monuments. For example, a study of sculptures from ninth-century churches in central Greece shows artistic activity was able to flourish. Under Basil I (867-86), the area was sufficiently stable for a major foundation to be built—Skripou in Boeotia, in 873-74.<sup>56</sup> It has been suggested that its founder, the protospatharios Leo, was also strategos of Hellas. Megaw maintains, however, that Leo's role in the founder's inscription indicates simply that he "had charge of the imperial domain throughout the province."<sup>57</sup>

Megaw concludes from an elegant epigram inscribed on the south wall of the narthex that the wealth of the protospatharios Leo came not from his imperial connection but from his own fertile estates around Orchomenos, and he attributes the main purpose of the foundation to "an avowed propagandist purpose."<sup>58</sup> Whether or not the foundation was intended as a symbol of imperial solidarity and power in the area, it is nonetheless show that the monument stands in the tradition of local churches erected at great expense in the hope that the founder's soul would be saved. The foundation of the monastery of Skripou with its large and handsomely decorated katholikon—larger even than the katholikon of Hosios Loukas—may be linked to the military and political stabilization of Greece in the late ninth century. Furthermore, through its construction, the wealthy Leo, probably a resident of nearby Thessalonica, makes a clearly intelligible local statement simultaneously of his power and of his piety.<sup>59</sup> The katholikon at Skripou with its dedicatory inscriptions represents an important precedent in the area of Thessalonica for church patronage by a wealthy local official and landowner.<sup>60</sup>

In ninth- and tenth-century Hellas the role of the military was crucial for the security of the province, especially in warding off attack from the sea. For this reason the military element formed the backbone of society at this time, for, according to Setton, "the Aegean world was harassed incessantly throughout the entire ninth century by Syrian and Cretan Arabs."<sup>61</sup> Under Basil I a major victory over the Arabs had been led by the strategos of Hellas, Orestes. When a fortress on Lesbos was attacked, soldiers were conscripted from the entire theme, which enabled Orestes to repulse the invaders.<sup>62</sup> Also

<sup>56</sup> Megaw, "Skripou Screen," pp. 18-20.

<sup>57</sup> The origin of much of Basil's wealth in Greece, through gifts of the wealthy widow Theodora who lived at Patras, indicates imperial interest and involvement in the area.

<sup>58</sup> Megaw, "Skripou Screen," p. 23 and n. 84, for the inscription, see the small booklet put out by the symbolists (C. Chantziaridou-Koumou et al.) *Ho hios ti Panagias ti Skripou Boeotias* (Athens, 1981), pp. 14-15.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>60</sup> Megaw compares the lengths of the two churches ("Skripou Screen," p. 23, n. 105). Recent new evidence of official patronage churches appears in a dedicatory inscription at Ephe Tui Kilisi in Cappadocia of ca. 925; in this case the donor holds

both military and civil administrative titles, see N. Oikonomides, "The Dedicatory Inscription of Ephe Tui Kilisi (Cappadocia)," in *Classica, Festschrift für J. Seznec*, Harvard University Studies (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 201-6.

<sup>61</sup> The war at Skripou of ancient building materials from the ruins around Orchomenos also provides a local parallel to the war at Hosios Loukas of the marble from ancient Ithra (Megaw, "Skripou Screen," p. 26).

<sup>62</sup> Setton, "Basil," p. 121. See also V. Christides, "The Battle of the Meloria of Crete in the Aegean Sea (Piracy and Conquest)," *Byzantion* 51 (1981): 70-71.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

under Basil, a Peloponnesian strategos led a similar victory at Methone. Aegina however fell victim to the Moslems in 826 and again in 896 causing the inhabitants to flee.<sup>50</sup> At least one attempt was made by the military administration of Hellas in the ninth century to raise troops for an attempt to regain Crete, the closest and best-established base of Arab operations threatening the Greek coast.<sup>51</sup>

There is little evidence of the flourishing Arab culture that must have existed on Crete during the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>52</sup> The fall of the capital city of Candia to the Byzantine general Nicephorus Phocas in 961—and the succeeding Crusades—seem to have all but obliterated traces of Arab dwelling and culture.<sup>53</sup> Some idea of the great lavishness and wealth of Arab Crete can be gleaned from the description by Leo Diakonos of the booty taken at its capture, as displayed in Nicephorus's triumph in Constantinople.

After a magnificent reception by the emperor Romanus, he celebrated a triumph at the Hippodrome, before all the assembled people who marveled at the magnitude and splendor of the booty. For a vast amount of gold and silver was to be seen, as well as barbarian coins of refined gold, garments shot with gold, purple carpets, and all sorts of treasures, crafted with the greatest skill, sparkling with gold and precious stones. There were also full sets of armor, helmets, swords and breastplates, all gilded, and countless weapons, shields and back-bent bows (if someone happened by there, he would think that the entire wealth of the barbarian land had been collected at that time in the Hippodrome).<sup>54</sup>

Unfortunately none of this booty survives that can be identified with certainty, although we can get an idea of its elegance and quality from some pieces in the treasury of San Marco in Venice.<sup>55</sup> What must be surmised is the wider impact of this booty on the empire, particularly after it fell into the hands of the troops and their strategoi who had contributed to the victory.

As military support was solicited from the themes previously, it was undoubtedly required by Nicephorus Phocas at the time of the Cretan campaign of 961, especially from the themes most affected by the marauding Arabs: the themes of Thrace (of which Nicephorus was himself strategos), Hellas, Peloponnese, and the Aegean Sea. Help in the form of prayers was also solicited by Nicephorus from monasteries around the em-

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>51</sup> Herrin, "Aspects of Hellenization," p. 125 and n. 10; Miles, "Byzantium and the Arabs," pp. 57, describes the impact of Arab assaults on Greek inhabitants.

<sup>52</sup> Miles, "Byzantium and the Arabs," pp. 29–30; the question of whether Athens was occupied by Arabs is still unresolved. Numerous pseudo-Kufic and animal motifs appear in architectural decoration in Greece at this time, but the means and spirit of their transmission remain unclear. See also Grabar, "La décoration architecturale," pp. 149–171.

<sup>53</sup> Miles, "Byzantium and the Arabs," p. 17.

<sup>54</sup> Lower Alice-Mary Talbot thanks for this translation from Leo the Deacon (Bonn ed., pp. 27–29), from chap. 12.

<sup>55</sup> A number of objects of ninth- and tenth-century Abbasid origin survive in the Treasury of San Marco in Venice. Some of them might have been part of the spoils brought from Constantinople to Venice after the Fourth Crusade, but in any case give us an impression of the character of these "treasures crafted with the greatest skill" (see in *The Treasury of San Marco Venice*, Metropolitan Museum of Art catalogue [New York, 1944], Daniel Alcouffe, "Islamic Hardstone-carving," pp. 207–8 and catalogue nos. 29–31 with plates on pp. 227–229).

pire; monastic communities were urged to pray fervently for the deliver of the Arab infidel.<sup>56</sup> One community where prayers were solicited was Mount Athos, and St. Athanasios of Athos himself came to Crete at the time of the campaign to offer spiritual support. Soon after, Nicephorus handsomely endowed Athanasios with funds necessary to commence the building of his monastery, the Great Lavra.<sup>57</sup> Luke of Steiris had prophesied Nicephorus's victory on Crete.

These things are indeed a source of wonder but his prophecy concerning Crete altogether provokes disbelief, even though it is well attested, for nearly twenty years earlier he made a prediction that it would be conquered and under whose command quest would take place, he said clearly, "Romanus will subdue Crete." But since Romanus the elder was ruling the empire at the time of his prediction, someone asked him if this meant the one who was currently ruling and he said, "Not this one, but another one."<sup>58</sup>

The monastery of Hosios Loukas thus acquired special distinction after this victory since it was Luke's burial place.<sup>59</sup> We can also assume it would have received some form of recognition, although we have no specific record of this. Participating *maragos* and their soldiers would have reaped substantial rewards, either from spoils or as gifts from their leaders. The Cretan victory not only relieved the area of central Greece of a dangerous threat to its security but it was also the cause of a great influx of wealth. A natural repository for some of this wealth would have been gifts and offerings to monasteries in gratitude for monks' prayers. Furthermore, it follows that a chief recipient of these gifts would have been the monastery of Hosios Loukas—in recognition of the prophecy fulfilled, which took on special significance at this time as evidence of divine protection of Hellas through the intercession of the saint.

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

The third set of factors to be considered in relation to Hosios Loukas are administrative and economic ones, for we should understand the possible regional incentives for the founding of this monastery. Exploring questions of ownership, patronage, and regulation of monasteries in relation to the community or society around them leads to a practical view of what the situation at Hosios Loukas must have been.

The first question, of ownership of monasteries, has been studied recently, contributing greatly to our understanding of the various systems in effect during the middle Byzantine period.<sup>60</sup> The proprietary system of church or monastery ownership has its roots in Justinian's legislation in which lay owners were first given rights to request ex-

<sup>56</sup> Dorotheos, *Epistolae Byzantinae*, Bn. 30, 101b.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 101c.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 101d, letter nos. 83.

<sup>59</sup> Lemerle, "Vie ancienne," p. 94.

<sup>60</sup> See Constant, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 10.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 101c.

<sup>62</sup> See Dorotheos, *Private Religious Foundations*.



ing structures in return for the title of *kator* or *katoris* (founder).<sup>20</sup> In the first half of the tenth century many private and imperial monasteries were founded, for example, in the Peloponnese, where high officials were granted the *stavropigion* or foundation charter.<sup>21</sup> However, the abuse of the system of private ownership by *stenoies* using their position for personal profit led to Nicephorus Phocas's *Brevet* of 964 banning the founding of new ecclesiastical foundations, in order to bolster support of existing ones. Also instituted at this time, before the reign of Basil II, was the system called *charitiki*, a public program allowing private management of religious institutions by lay benefactors.<sup>22</sup> Private profit often motivated this local sponsorship of monastic foundations when local bishops granted them "in *charitiki*."<sup>23</sup> It was out of a *charitikiarhos*'s desire for personal profit that the system so often failed.<sup>24</sup>

The custom then arose of naming local government officials as trustees or protectors of the monasteries. The rights of the founders in relation to the trustees were carefully formulated in *typika*, so that the monastery was protected from exploitation and remained essentially autonomous and self-governing.<sup>25</sup> One of the most important rights of the founder was burial and commemoration within the monastery. By the late eleventh century all monastic charters used this form of organization.<sup>26</sup> Since there are no surviving records that indicate whether the monastery of Hosios Loukas was under the control of a *charitikiarhos* or whether it had its own founder's *typikon* and operated more autonomously, both of these options will be explored; this information combined with what indications do survive in documents on Hosios Loukas allows us to construct a hypothetical view of the monastery's administration and patronage.

Patronage necessary for setting up or expanding a monastery could come through two principal channels: imperial or aristocratic and local. Imperial patronage is documented in the case of the Lavra founded by St. Athanasios on Mount Athos in 961; Nicephorus Phocas in gratitude for Athanasios's spiritual support of his reconquest of Crete gave the money necessary for the founding of the Great Lavra monastery. Later the emperor John Tzimiskes also made contributions.<sup>27</sup>

Patronage by wealthy aristocrats was responsible for the building of churches in some provincial centers. Kastoria in Macedonia is an example. There, a number of small churches were founded by members of the local elite in the tenth and eleventh centuries with enough endowment to be run as monasteries.<sup>28</sup> These were family foundations with calculated benefits for the patron, in her study of these churches Ann Wharton says:

A private monastery in Byzantium in the Middle Ages represented an investment

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 53-58.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the strategies of the Peloponnese in the Vita of Nikon, see Di Costa-Loudell, "Santo de grèce," pp. 190-62.

<sup>22</sup> Charanis, "Monastic Properties," pp. 70-71.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations*, pp. 137-63; Ph. Meyer, *Die Hauptkirchen für die Geschichte der Abteikirchen* (Leipzig, 1894), p. 107; Charanis, "Monastic Properties," p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> John of Antioch does not allow for any generous

use of the position of *charitikiarhos*, see Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations*, pp. 136-91.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 211-16.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>27</sup> Lemerle, "La vie antiochienne," pp. 77-78; Athanasios's reproaches of Nicephorus when he failed to become a monk as he had promised resulted in gifts of even more money for the monastery.

<sup>28</sup> Epstein, "Kastoria," pp. 200-201.

in some ways analogous to a modern insurance policy. It provided the donor with prayers for his and his family's souls, with a respectable place of interment and/or burial for the members of his family, and even, if he were lucky, with a small profit.<sup>29</sup>

The size and lavishness of the undertaking was relative to the local wealth, some communities being able to support larger foundations than others.<sup>30</sup>

Provincial churches of Cappadocia were patronized by local landowners. In the case of the "Pigeon House" at Cavuşin it is thought that local landowners, perhaps members of the family of the emperor Nicephorus Phocas, who were connected with the army were responsible and that the church was founded in thanks for a military victory and as an invocation for continued divine support.<sup>31</sup>

A late eleventh-century document, the will of Eustathios Boilas, gives valuable testimony about the concerns of a wealthy landowner, a *protospatharios*, in the eastern provinces, in the theme of Iberia. His numerous possessions which are bequeathed to various persons, include churches and monasteries, along with their staffs and their precious movable objects, icons, vessels, clothing, and books.<sup>32</sup> The commemorative services for one church intended to serve as his own burial place and that of his family are precisely outlined. The monasteries, as with other parcels of land, were owned outright by him.

For tenth-century Hellas, the information on land use and the sources and distribution of wealth is scattered. Our most illuminating document is the cadaster of Thessaly that we have already mentioned, a fiscal treatise on land-holdings in Bozotia compiled in the second half of the eleventh century.<sup>33</sup> Since it deals with a region adjoining Iberia, it is of interest in connection with Hosios Loukas's patronage. It is noteworthy that the treatise refers to landowners of high social status: not to peasants or the poor. "By the end of the eleventh century the land was in the hands of the *dynatoi*, some of whom lived far from their fields and were even connected with southern Italy and Sicily."<sup>34</sup> Furthermore the conditions described in the cadaster can be assumed to have applied in the tenth century as well, according to Svoronos: "A primary conclusion is then imposed: the continuity of fiscal policies, in spite of differences of application from the tenth to the end of the eleventh century."<sup>35</sup> The picture given by the cadaster is of wealthy and titled landowners alongside peasants who lived in rural communities on their own lands. As

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 201; see also p. 202, on family patronage patterns.

<sup>30</sup> Another family foundation was the Paraghi Tri Chalkiron in Salonic, founded according to the inscription in memory of the *katepan* of Longchamps by his wife; see Papadopoulos, *Manuscriptum*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>31</sup> Vryonis, "Decline of Medieval Hellenism," p. 12; see esp. Radley, "Pigeon House," pp. 113-14 and 127.

<sup>32</sup> "More probably the area harboured hermits or small communities of monks whose presence so moved the attention of patrons who provided for the education and decoration of churches." A further

ecclesiastical visit in the person of John before the Archangel, a source of generous divine aid, which appear both in Hosios Loukas and in Cavuşin; see C. Constant, "The Pigeon House at Hosios Loukas," in *Tenth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 17-18.

<sup>33</sup> Eustratios, "Mok," p. 145 and Vryonis, "Will of Eustathios Boilas," pp. 200-01.

<sup>34</sup> Svoronos, "Cadastre."

<sup>35</sup> For an overview of the significance of the Cadastre, see Kalligas and Svoronos, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> Svoronos, "Cadastre," p. 144.

Lemerle points out, however, the status of the population mentioned would seem to be more bourgeois than aristocratic.<sup>103</sup>

In the Vita of Holy Luke there is ample evidence of two social and economic groups. The first group comprises villagers who are settled along the Gulf of Corinth. These join the saint's following and are described as belonging to the *choron*.<sup>104</sup> They are the people with whom the saint is most concerned, indeed his agrarian origins as one of them are defined, for his grandfather was a squatter on land near Kastorion when the family first moved to the region.<sup>105</sup>

The second group is the wealthy and powerful class also mentioned by the Vita. The *spatharios* Philippos was accustomed frequently to associate with Luke because his brother was one of the saint's close associates; when the three meet, Luke shares in luxurious banqueting, a symbol of Philippos's great wealth.<sup>106</sup> The saint's contact with wealth and power is also apparent in the account of the visit of the archbishop of Corinth, the most wealthy and influential person of Luke's acquaintance, who offers to make a contribution in gold.<sup>107</sup>

Another source of wealth is also suggested by the Vita. Ships and shipowners are mentioned, and trade routes, like pilgrimage routes, must have used the Gulf of Corinth.<sup>108</sup>

There was a ship sailing from Italy, and in the middle of the night it was greatly tossed about by a storm. Having escaped the danger through his [Luke's] prayers it came with difficulty to his island. Now since the saint who lived there was not unknown to the sailors, as soon as they disembarked from the ship they went to the saint and told him what had happened and recounted their unexpected salvation.

The graffiti of ships and nets on the walls of the crypt attest the continuing association of the monastery with mariners (figs. 79, 81). The occurrence of the most graffiti of this type on the two walls inside the entrance of the crypt suggests they were a form of supplication for intercessory prayers for a safe journey.

One reason why there would regularly be ships from Italy in the Gulf of Corinth would be the silk trade.<sup>109</sup> In Weigand's investigation of the Byzantine silk industry he

<sup>103</sup> Lemerle, *Agrian History*, p. 198, for an outline of the rural structure of landholding the commune, see pp. 17-19 and p. 76 on the *Bural Code*, the *choron* was the unit for dwelling and for cultivation of land, a unit made up of the lands whose cultivators lived in a single village, as already established in the *Novels of Justinian* (nos. 18, 30).

<sup>104</sup> Connor, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 30.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 2.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 61; however, *spatharios* is not as high a rank as *spatharokandidatos* by the mid-tenth century.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 48.

<sup>108</sup> The story of Demetrios the shipowner makes one wonder what manner of shipping brought him

to the region of Ioannina for frequent visits (*Ibid.*, chap. 11). In another story (chap. 32) a "ship sailing from Italy" was saved from shipwreck by the intervention of the saint and came safely to shore on Antipolis, the crew already knew about Holy Luke, evidently because this was a regular route for them. What was it carrying? Although this may have been on a route for transferring trade goods across the isthmus of Corinth, was the traffic also in products produced along the Gulf itself?

<sup>109</sup> On silk production, see N. Oikonomides, "Silk Trade and Production in Byzantium from the Sixth to the Ninth Century: The Seal of Komnenos," *DOP*, 45 (1990): 11-13; and Loper, "Silk Industry."

See also A. Strenuous, "An Art Historical Study of

concludes that Thebes was its center, probably from the tenth century or earlier.<sup>110</sup> Along with Patras, Corinth, and Athens, Thebes was the leader of this group of silk-producing towns.<sup>111</sup> Weigand points that pseudo-Kufic and stylized animal designs made their way into the sculptural vocabulary of the region from the sixth century on through designs on silk cloth. These popular designs were then carried via the silk trade not only throughout central Greece, where they are typical, but later to Sicily, Venice, and western Europe. Thebes was a natural center of the industry because of its abundance of water and the presence of certain minerals in the water, important for the washing and dying process.<sup>112</sup> A further reason for supposing the early establishment of the silk industry was in Thebes is cited: "Thebes ranked as a bishopric at the beginning of the ninth century and was throughout this time the seat of the strategos of Hellas."<sup>113</sup> As a seat of religious and political authority, Thebes was suitably the center of this luxury industry in the western empire.

The importance of the silk industry lay in its high monetary and symbolic value for the empire. Silk "was the attire of the Emperor and the aristocracy, an indispensable symbol of political power and a prime requirement for ecclesiastical ceremonies."<sup>114</sup> It was crucial for the emperor to maintain control, in fact a monopoly, on the silk industry; its price was kept at a high level, and only the privileged were allowed to wear garments of silk.

As a further source of the local wealth that was applied to the early patronage of Hosios Loukas, silk must be considered. There is abundant evidence in the decoration of the monastery of inspiration by motifs used on silks. The animal designs on the plaques under the windows are similar to those on silk weavings, pseudo-Kufic ornament in the brickwork as well as in the mosaic and fresco decoration has been cited as undeniable evidence of Islamic influence, which might have spread by various media including silk.<sup>115</sup> If Thebes was a great silk-producing center, not only would these motifs have been available as a possible inspiration for sculpture and painting, but the great wealth generated by the industry may well have been instrumental indirectly in supporting a local economy that could produce such a lavish foundation as Hosios Loukas.

An episode in the Vita provides an intriguing reference to this luxurious cloth industry. In the story of the visit of Philippos the *spatharios* to the monastery, he had a dream with a vision of the saint:

Then he raised his eyes toward the person being pointed out and saw a great and marvelous thing: an exceedingly precious purple cloth [*porphyra*] was spread out over the earth and above it the great man [Holy Luke] was standing, gleaming wondrously.

the Byzantine Silk Industry" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1982), esp. p. 215, for a discussion on *porphyra*, the silk used only for imperial garments.

<sup>111</sup> Weigand, "Hellasch-Bizantische Seidenwebern," pp. 507 and 510.

<sup>112</sup> Ninth-century evidence for Patras's role in the industry comes from the Life of Basil I (Vesp. Basil

I [Paris, 1958], p. 189.

<sup>113</sup> Weigand, "Hellasch-Bizantische Seidenwebern," pp. 507-8.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 507.

<sup>115</sup> Loper, "Silk Industry," p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> Grabar, "La décoration archaïsante," pp. 12-13, esp. p. 14 on the influence of silk designs.

drously and indescribably both from his body and from his clothing and seen entirely as light.<sup>108</sup>

This appears to be a psychological image, for purple silk cloth would have been associated with the spatharios possibly because of the industry in which he was engaged, the production of purple silk for the imperial house.<sup>109</sup> If the image is the author's, it could still indicate Philippos's connection with silk of highest quality, an industry probably controlled by the civil aristocracy of Thebes.<sup>110</sup>

Civil patronage could have come to the monastery of Hosios Loukas partly through Philippos the wealthy spatharios of Thebes who may have been granted the monastery in charistiki. Military patronage could also have played a significant role because of the sudden influx of wealth into Hellas after the Cretan campaign. However, both these factors converge if we return to the connection of the monastery with Theodore Leobachos, the abbot of Hosios Loukas mentioned in the Naupactos charter.

A hypothesis will now be considered that correlates with the three factors we have discussed: religious, military, and economic. It hinges on the two fresco portraits of abbots, Theodosios and Philotheus, in the southeast vault of the crypt.

Military patronage of monasteries in nearby communities is documented. In the Peloponnese military governors became protectors and patrons of the monasteries of prominent holy men.<sup>111</sup> The great prominence of portraits of military saints at Hosios Loukas may indicate patronage for the Katholikon by a powerful local military figure, a strategos who had acquired great wealth in the Cretan campaign.<sup>112</sup> Among the military portraits of the Katholikon alone it has been noted that there were at least five Theodores; it has been suggested this could reflect the wishes of a donor by that name, Theodore Leobachos.<sup>113</sup>

If Theodore Leobachos took the monastic name of Theodosios when he retired from the world, he could be the titled aristocrat described on the funeral plaque discovered at the monastery with the inscription:

<sup>108</sup> Conomos, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 63. *Porphyra* (f) can be the color term, or a purple robe of an emperor (Lampe); that the robe would be of silk cloth is, I think, understood. For the production of purple silk in the Thebes, see Lepore, "Silk Industry," p. 34.

<sup>109</sup> It is well known that there was a large Jewish population in Thebes in the medieval period, and also that Jews often took on the task of dyeing and also of finishing and embroidering silk. (Wagand, "Hellas-byzantinische Seidenweberei," pp. 293, 306.)

<sup>110</sup> A *koumekarios* is also mentioned in one of the healing miracles of the Vita; these people were the officials responsible for overseeing the production and distribution of silk (Conomos, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 62). Also, the name of one of the members listed in the Naupactos charter, Hlato, from the word for "purple cloth of silk," suggests he was connected with the silk industry (see Nesbitt and Wata, "Context and Patronage," p. 121).

<sup>111</sup> "Comitasterii," p. 177 and n. 27; for a study of the economy of the region of Thebes and Naupactos in the medieval period, see C. G. Hatfield, "The Decline of Imperial Authority in Southwest Central Greece and the Role of Archbishops and Bishops in the Failure of Byzantine Resistance and Reconquest 1180-1207 A.D." (Ph.D. Columbia University, 1958), esp. pp. 19-22.

<sup>112</sup> This was the case of Nikon Metanoite of Sparta. That he was considered part of the local milieu is demonstrated by the prominent placing of his portrait on the west wall of the nave at Hosios Loukas.

<sup>113</sup> For further discussion of this possibility in connection with the decoration of the church, see my discussion in the section "Program and Meaning" in Chapter I.

<sup>114</sup> Mouriki, *Nea Moni*, p. 236.

Formerly Theodorus, in turn Theodosios, distinguished processional, now the monk, the patrician who conducted himself nobly, now the *karynos* against the haughty, and the thrice bearer of the mystic garment.<sup>114</sup>

In the significantly placed portrait medallion of the crypt we could then recognize the same person, but as the abbot Theodosios, who was referred to as "the all-busy late monk and abbot of Stiris lord Theodores Leobachos," in the Naupactos charter.<sup>115</sup>

Furthermore, this hypothesis would fit logistical aspects of the crypt. In the manner of the monks Paul and Timothy of the Evergetis monastery, whose typikon is one of our best records of monastic customs, the brothers Theodosios and Philippos of the Vita might have become patron-founders and abbots of Hosios Loukas.<sup>116</sup> If Philippos had taken the monastic name of Philotheus he could be the founder mentioned in the Akoulouthia (the prayers for the translation of Luke's relics) as being responsible for the building of the church.<sup>117</sup> The two tombs in the crypt on either side of the sanctuary would then be explained: they were built for the two brothers who were the patrons for the construction and decoration of the Katholikon. The locations of their portraits and those of their namesakes in the southeast and northeast vaults were planned to correspond to their tombs in the bays beneath.

The rich and powerful of Thebes no doubt played a role in the building, decoration, and maintenance of the monastery in its structures, its undoubtedly opulent portable objects, its other material embellishments, and its attached land-holdings. The Katholikon at Scripou sets a significant precedent for wealthy Theban patronage of a burial church in the area. That the Katholikon was founded to be the final resting place of Holy Luke and of the monastery's patrons, two aristocrats of Thebes who had become monks, seems likely in the light of the cultural and social currents in tenth-century Hellas.

<sup>114</sup> See Nikas, *Okrodimikon Chronikon*, p. 28; Judith Herrin kindly tells me that *antipatros* in combination with *panagios* probably indicates he held the position of theme governor, for the same title occurs three times in the twelfth-century Vita of Hosios Meletios with this meaning; the term *karynos* is current in South Italian administration (A. Hen, *Le Paléologue byzantin* [Paris, 1904], p. 91), the phrase "thrice bearer of the mystic garment," however, demands elucidation, although the mention of a garment might again suggest ties with silk production, or a robe signifying a high office.

<sup>115</sup> Nesbitt and Wata, "Context and Patronage," p. 120.

<sup>116</sup> See Conomos, "Evergetis Typikon," pp. 4-5; also see Conomos, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 52.

<sup>117</sup> As the time of the translation of Luke's relics, these prayers were written to be part of the service of Great Vespers for May 7; see Krenos, *Photike*, 271-121. I discuss them in connection with Philotheus in Chapter I. See also Fellus, "Zur Topographie und Chronologie von Hosios Loukas," pp. 152-3.

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<sup>118</sup> Nesbitt and Wata, "Context and Patronage," p. 120.

<sup>119</sup> See Conomos, "Evergetis Typikon," pp. 4-5; also see Conomos, *Life of Saint Luke*, chap. 52.

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## CONCLUSION

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LEAVING THE crypt and the subtle colors and white highlights of its frescoes, we now recognize that they represent a coherent view. The beauty of these frescoes first challenged us to answer questions they posed: Who is represented? Why were these images selected? What messages did the Byzantine viewer find encoded in them? Their style and models also required definition. How did they fit into the artistic developments of the time, and what was the relationship between artist and patron? Fundamental to the study was the question of function: What was the connection between the frescoes and the use of space in the crypt? Here we were fortunate to have the Life, which enabled us to recognize the full significance of the frescoes. With the Life, a comprehensive view of the undertaking became possible. Through it the circumstances surrounding the mid-tenth-century founding of the monastery became intelligible, something rarely possible in the study of a Byzantine monument. The Vita evokes the times of threat and trouble for village people in the region of the Gulf of Corinth, patterns of monastic life, and Luke's miraculous powers of prophecy and healing which became part of the consciousness and identity of the people of Hellas. Even after his death, his miracle-working tomb offered protection and healing, bringing fame and crowds of pilgrims to the place.

The events of this Life contribute a new set of criteria for dating the monastery in the last half of the tenth century. They provide not only valuable testimony supporting new and precise datings for the building of the Panagia church (946-55) and the Katholikon (956-70) but also a vivid sense of the lives and concerns of this holy man, of other monks, and of all those associated with him and his monastery. Among them, we have argued, were wealthy officials from Thebes who in retiring from the world financed the building and decoration (ca. 970-1000) of the great Katholikon, with the crypt as their burial place; they are the abbots Theodosios (known also by his worldly name, Theodore Leobachos) and Philotheus, who still look down from their medallion portraits above the southeast bay of the crypt. The Vita mentions Gregorius the monk who was very likely the donor of the marble revetment of the Katholikon. Pancratus the healer can also be imagined in his role at the tomb. The Life helps explain many features of the crypt and its frescoes while providing a vivid sense of their religious, social, and historical context. The local pride of pious villagers and wealthy patrons alike in their own miracle-working saint (his popular appeal being analogous in many ways to that of urban saints of Thessaloniki or Constantinople) emerges as the clear incentive for the monastery's creation.

The monastery of Hosios Loukas has only begun to yield up its secrets. For not only does the great Katholikon merit closer study than could be attempted in this monograph, but the crypt itself is made up of much more than the graceful and expressive figures of the frescoes or of the hymning and processions we imagine on the saint's feast

## CONCLUSION

day. For it involves people, their lives, skills, beliefs, everyday habits, and mutual concerns. All combine here as part of a remote and complex past: saints, monks, artists, villagers, pilgrims, patrons, suppliants. Through them the process of creation of this monument, at this time and in this place, becomes momentarily intelligible as art and context merge in a new and vivid reality.

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- abbot, 47-11; epiphany for, 50
- Abrahamite, Dorothy, 92
- Abramius, 25, 47, fig. 41
- agapema, 83
- ahelathar, 51, 84
- Ampelos, island of, 111
- ampulata, 39
- Anastasis, 39, 55
- Andrew, 22, 46, fig. 32
- Aniketos, 16-17, 44, fig. 23
- ancientment, 98
- Anthony, 29; Life of, 48
- Apophthegmata Patrum, 48
- apostles, 46; portraits of, 18-24
- Arab culture, 114
- Arabs, 7, 52, 111-12
- Arctas, 16, fig. 22
- Athanasius, 29, 48, fig. 48
- Athanasius of Athos, 7, 31, 50-51, 116, fig. 51
- Athanasius of Methone, 111
- Athens, 119
- Athos, Mount: Great Lavra, 7, 31; Phocas Lectionary, 39-40; Protaton Monastery, 17; Stauronikita MS. cod. 43 (Gospels), 21
- Bačkovo (Bulgaria), 75, 89
- Bari, Exultet Roll, 28
- Bartholomew, 19, fig. 27
- Basil I, 113
- Beaura, Lascaria, 71, 710n. 12-14, 83n.63
- Bulgaria, two-story churches in, 75
- Bulgarians, 111-12
- burial: of Luke of Steira, 78-79; provided by monks, 106; rituals of, 6, 92; sarcophagus for, 54; theme of, 54
- burial chapel, 56
- burial church, 113
- Burial of Christ, 37, 54, pl. 10, figs. 67-69
- Cadaster of Thebes, 51, 107, 117
- catalogue of frescoes, 11-43
- Cavucin, cave church, 36, 38, 62, 64, 115, 117, fig. 100
- Cefalo, 45
- chariniki, 116
- Chariadakis, Manolis, 39-40
- Chion, medallion with bust of, 10, 40, 96, fig. 98
- Chronicle of Monemvasia, 110
- ciborium, 79
- commemoration of the dead, 83-92, 100-105, 106-07
- Confessionary of the Naupacton Women, 106-07
- Constantinople: Basilian Monastery, 30; Bodrum Camii (Myrelaion), 74, 101; Fethiye Camii, 75; Gal Camii, 74; Hagia Sophia, 29; Kariye Camii, 12, 13, 17, 40, 43; Konstantin, 103; Oshlar Camii, 74
- Corfu, Hagios Merkourios, 16
- Corinth, 27, 119
- Crete: Arabs on, 112, 114; Byzantine reconquest of, 7, 54, 56, 108, 120; prophecy about, 7
- cross, shape of church, 80
- Crucifixion, 33, 35, pl. 2, figs. 58, 59, 97
- crypts, functions of, 68
- cult: See healing cult; healing miracles; healing ritual
- miracle, miracles of Luke of Steira, therapeutic cures, at tomb of Luke of Steira, 80
- Cyrel of Skythopolis, 26, 72, 73
- Daniels, 109, 113n.69
- Daphn, 33-36, 40, 51, 55, 62
- dating: of Hosios Loukas, 77-81
- Dionis, 6, 10, 11, 47, 53-56, 109, fig. 83
- Demetrius, 12, 14, 44-45, figs. 12, 13
- demonic possession, 93
- Deposition, 36-37, 54, pl. 9, figs. 64-66, 100
- Dionysius the Areopagite, 27
- disciples, 19, 40, 54
- divine liturgy, 72
- doctors, 103
- domed octagon plan, 69-70
- doctors, depiction of, 56
- Dormition: See Koimesis
- Dorothea, 26, 47, fig. 44
- Doubting Thomas: See incredulity of Thomas
- dreams, 5, 97
- Egeria, 195
- ekona, 96
- Elmalı, cave church, 18
- Entry into Jerusalem, 12-13, 54, pls. 4-6, figs. 33-37
- Ephesus, Basilica of St. John, 19
- Episcopi, Mani (Peloponnese), 28

## INDEX

\*\*\*\*\*

# INDEX

- eptaphos, 18, 180-208  
 Eucharist, 83  
 euklerion, 80, 81, 81n, 87  
 Eustathios, 15, figs. 18, 19  
 Eustathios Basilak, will of, 117  
 Euthymios, 26, 28, burial of, 87; monastery of, 72  
 Evergetis Typikon, 88  
 East icons, 10  
 Fostat Monism, 55  
 Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS. Plat. 1, 56  
 (Rabbula Gospel), 13-14, 18  
 founder of a monastery, 51, 87, 118  
 frescoes, 1, 4, 9; entrance vault, 40-42; funerary content of, 57; medallion portraits, 11-12; ornament, 42-43; plan showing subjects of, fig. 10; program of, 4-6, 10-11, 41; scenes in lunettes, 12-40; state of preservation of, 9; style of, 6, 58-67  
 funerary practices, 6, 83-84, 106  
 George, 13-14, 16, 44-45, fig. 14  
 graffiti, 41, 42, 118  
 Greek Archaeological Service, 3, 9, 59  
 Gregory (monk), 109  
 Gregory of Nyssa, 27  
 Hagia Sophia, 12  
 Hagios vs. hoiros, 28  
 healing cult, 5, 16, 53, 93  
 healing miracles, terms used in, 94-101  
 healing ritual, 57  
 Hellas, 112  
 Hellenization of the Slavs, 110  
 Herim, Judith, 111, 121n, 122  
 Hieronimus, 27  
 Holy Luke. See Luke of Steiris  
 holy men, 24-25, 47  
 homonymous saints, 46, 48-49, 53, 53n, 275  
 Hosios Loukas: architecture, 69; church of St. Barbara, 77, 81  
 crypt, 1; frescoes of (see frescoes), function of, 1, 6, 71; furnishings of, 71; liturgical usage, 7; plan of, 71, fig. 2; sanctuary, fig. 7; spatial organization of, 10; tombs of abbots, figs. 4-6  
 dating of churches, 82-83  
 Kachelhaken: building of, 78; date of, 82-83; decoration of, 7; dedicatory inscription in, 109; founding of, 121; frescoes, 14, 28, 32, 34; mosaics, 12-14, 16-29, 24-35, 39, 41, 47, 14, 62, figs. 93-99; narthex, 14, 55; shrine of Luke of Steiris, 90  
 Paragias, church of the (Theotokos), 8, 77, 82; plan of, fig. 1  
 social role of monastery, 111  
 hospital, 103  
 Hungarians, 111  
 icon, 110, 174, 96n, 123; of Luke of Steiris, 42, 70; of the Virgin, 90, 106  
 Incredulity of Thomas, 19, 54-55, pl. 1a, figs. 72-76, 99  
 incubation, 5, 91, 97  
 intercession, 100, 109; scene of, 11, 56, fig. 82  
 invasions of Greece, 111  
 Istanbul. See Constantinople  
 Italy, refugees from Greece in, 111  
 ivories, 11, 17, 43  
 James, 22, fig. 31  
 Joannikios, 24, 47, fig. 37  
 John the Theologian, 18, 46, pl. 2, fig. 26  
 Joshua, 43, 64, 117n, 98, fig. 94  
 Karanlik, Kilise, cave church, 56  
 Kastoria, churches of, 116; Hagios Anargyroi, 13, 14  
 Hagios Nicholas Kaimires, 13  
 kellion, 78-80  
 Kiev, Hagia Sophia, 64  
 Kiliclar Kilise, cave church, 16-17, 34, 40, 44, 62  
 Koimesis, 11, 49-51, 53-54, 85, fig. 77  
 konisterion, 84  
 kolyvoi, 85, 89  
 kommerkiarios, 99  
 koukoulion, 26, 28  
 Krimates, 7, 27, 108  
 kutor, 116  
 Lamentation, 38  
 land ownership, 117-18  
 larvas, 94-95  
 Last Supper, 35-36, 54, pl. 8, figs. 61-63  
 Lazarus the Galestote, 105  
 Lenten Tridion, MS. gr. 21, 40  
 Lenten Tridion, 12-17, 54  
 lentos, 35  
 Les, protoparthenos and strategos, 113  
 Leo Diakonos, 114  
 Life. See Vita of Luke of Steiris  
 lighting, 9, 84  
 liturgical calendar, 53  
 Loukas, saints named, 48  
 Loukas of Steiris. See Luke of Steiris  
 Loukas Gurnikotes, 52  
 Luke, apostle, 20, 46, fig. 30  
 Luke of Steiris, 10, 27, 28, 47-49, 51, figs. 46, 81, 96; burial place of, 78; Life of, See Vita; miracles of, 93-101  
 Luke the Stylite, 29, 36, 46, 52, pl. 3, fig. 49  
 Macedonian Renaissance, 3  
 Maguire, Henry, 33, 110, 184  
 Makarios, 23, fig. 39; identity of, 47

- Makarios of Alexandria, 86  
 Makarios of Egypt, 48  
 manuscripts, 63  
 Mark, 20, 46, fig. 29  
 Mary the Egyptian, 35  
 Mathew, 21, 46, fig. 31  
 Maximus, 25-26, 47, fig. 42  
 megalochroma, 28  
 Menologion, Metaphrastian, 53  
 Menologion of Basil II. See Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. gr. 1613  
 Mercurius, 15-16, 45, fig. 30  
 military organization, 112  
 miracle, 5, 6, 48, 49, 56  
 miracles of Luke of Steiris, 93, 99-101  
 monasteries: ownership of, 115; philanthropic role of, 103  
 monastic community, 54  
 monastic garb, 48  
 monasticism, 49; influence of in maintaining Orthodoxy, 110; representatives of, 48  
 monastic portraits, 49-50  
 monks: depictions of, 10, 41, 95, figs. 79, 80; role of, 57, 104  
 Monrale, 43  
 Mouriki, Doula, 53, 58n, 292  
 murder, 107  
 myron, 94-95  
 Myrophores, 37  
 myrrh, 12, 37  
 names, monastic, 8, 120-21  
 nani, 80  
 narthex: function of, 6; program of decoration, 55  
 Naupaktos, confraternity of, 106-7  
 Naupaktos charter, 51  
 Nea Moni, Chios, 12, 28-29, 34-35, 45, 53, 55, 62  
 Nereri, St. Pantoleonion, 38  
 Nestor, 14, 45, fig. 17  
 New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. gr. 619, 37  
 Nicephorus Phocas, 7, 31, 32, 64, 114, 116-17  
 Nicetas, 14, 45, fig. 16  
 Nicholas in the Fields, church of St. (Boonati), 76  
 Nikon of Sparta, 52, 105; monastery of, 70n, 10  
 Oeniate, strategos, 113  
 oil, 95  
 ornament, 10-11, figs. 84-92  
 orthodoxy, monasticism and, 110  
 osuary, 72, fig. 8  
 Pachomios, 28  
 Painter's Manual, of Doxypion of Psarra, 11, 44  
 Pakourianos Typikon, 73-89

# INDEX

- Palermo, monastic churches, 17; Monasterio, 41; Palatine Chapel, 41  
 Palatine monasteries of, 19, 120n, 174  
 Palatinian fathers, monks of, 72-74  
 Paterius, the monk, 108  
 penitents, 81-86, 88  
 Paterius, 41  
 Paterius Monastery, as hospital, 103  
 Paterius Typikon, 90  
 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. gr. 100 (Himmler) of Gregory of Nazianzus, 16, 34, 37, 34  
 Paterius, scenes of the, 11, 53-54  
 Paterius, 119  
 patronage, 7, 8, 102, of Hosios Loukas, 35, 120  
 patron saints, 45, 50  
 Paul, 19, 46, fig. 28  
 Peter, 18, 46, fig. 41  
 Peter of Argos, 111  
 Peter of Arona, 30, 100-101, 105  
 Philby, 33, fig. 35  
 Philon, spatharios, 32, 33, 108  
 Philotheos, 27, 48-49, fig. 41  
 Philotheos, abbot and patron, 8, 32, 39-50, 120, fig. 52  
 Plotinus, 16-17, 44, fig. 21  
 photographs, 5  
 physicians, 103  
 pilgrimage, 107-6  
 porphyre, 119  
 portrait medallions, 10, 11-32  
 portraits, 50-53  
 processions, 81  
 Procopius, 11, 108, 44-45, fig. 15  
 prophesy, 108, of Luke of Steiris, 28, 30, 108, 115  
 proprietary system of monastic ownership, 115  
 psalmody. See chionion  
 pseudo-Kake inscription, 42, 43, 62, 71, 119, fig. 93  
 Rabbula Gospel. See Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS. Plat. 1, 56  
 Ravenna, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, 40; Orthodox Baptistry, 42; San Vitale, 46; San Apollinare Nuovo, 36  
 Reurrection, 11, 37, 53-54  
 Romanus I, Lecapenus, 74  
 Romanus II, 77n, 41, 114  
 Rome: San Clement and Domus, 18; San Maria Antiqua, 14  
 Romanus Gospel, 53, 59-60  
 Sabas, 28, 48; monastery of, 72; Typikon, 80-87  
 Salomika, See Theotokos  
 Saint Angelo in Formis, 36  
 sarcophagi, 14, 52  
 silk industry, 118-119

# INDEX

- Siloam, pool of, 101, 101n, 146  
 Simon, 23-24, fig. 36  
 Sinai, Mount: Monastery of Saint Catherine, icons, 12-14, 18, 20, 23, 28, 35; mosaics, 18-19, 21-23, 47  
 Sisoës, 24-25, 47-48, fig. 38  
 Skripou, church of the Panagia (Boeotia), 113, 121  
 Skythikoi, 111  
 Soğandı Dere, cave church, 15  
*isoroi*, 94-95  
 space, liturgical uses of, 68  
*spoudaioi* and *philoponoi*, 106  
 Steiris, 27  
 Srikas, Eustathius, 9, 9n. 1, 82  
*strategoï*, 112, 115  
*strateia*, 112  
 substructures, 74  
 Symeon Stylites, 48  
 Synaxarium of Constantinople, 10, 17, 44, 49  
  
*taphoi*, 80, 94-95  
*thaumatourgoi*, 25, 27, 49, 93  
 Thebes, 27, 112-13, 118. *See also* Cadaster of Thebes  
*theke*, 79, 94-95  
 themes, 113  
 Theodore Leobachos, 8, 31, 51, 107, 120-21  
 Theodore of Stoudios, 25  
 Theodore of Sykeon, 103, 105, 109  
 Theodore Stratelates, 11, 14, 16, 44-46, fig. 11  
 Theodore Tiron, 45  
 Theodosius, 28, 48, fig. 47  
 Theodosius, abbot, 8, 30, 50-51, 107, 120, fig. 50  
 Theodosius of Cilicia, 29n. 158  
 Theodosius the Coenobiarch, 48  
 Theoktistus, 26, 47, fig. 43  
*Theotokion*, 56  
 Theotokos Evergetis. *See* Evergetis Typikon  
*therapeia*, 57, 104  
 Thessaloniki: Hagia Sophia, 29, 50; Hagios Deme-  
 trios, 12, 28, 50; Panagia Ton Chalkeon, 41, 47, 55, 64  
 Thomas, 22-23, fig. 34  
 Tokali Kilise: New Church, 15, 17, 33, 36, 37, 40, 45, 62; Old Church, 36, 38  
 tomb, of Luke of Steiris, 3, 54, 56-57, 70-71, 79, 94-97, figs. 4, 5  
 tombs, 5, 57, 75, 80, 83  
*topoi*, 78, 80  
*Tourkoï*, 111  
 trade, 118  
 typika, 6, 57, 86  
 typikon, liturgical, 84; Pakourianos, 89; Pantocrator, 90; Sabas, 86-87; Theotokos Evergetis, 88  
  
 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. gr. 699 (Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes), 20; MS. gr. 1613 (Menologium of Basil II), 12, 14-19, 21-25, 27, 29-30, 33, 43, 52-53, 65-66  
 Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS. gr. 17 (Psalter of Basil II), 45  
 Venice, San Marco, 114  
 Victor of Egypt, 17  
 vigil, 85  
 Vikentius, 17, 45, pl. 1, fig. 24  
 Virgin Mary, 56; intercessory role of, 55  
*Vita*, of Luke of Steiris, 5, 7, 30, 49, 57, 68, 77, 87, 93, 107, 118-19; contribution of, 122; events of Luke's life in, 27; miracle accounts in, 56; on intercession, 110; on invasions, 111  
  
 warrior martyrs, 44; portraits of, 11-17  
 Washing of the Feet, 34, 54, figs. 60, 98  
 Wharton, Annabel, 116-17  
 Women at the Tomb, 37, 54, pls. 10, 11, figs. 67, 70, 71, 100  
 Zemenna, stylite of, 27, 48





Plate 1. St. Vincent (14)

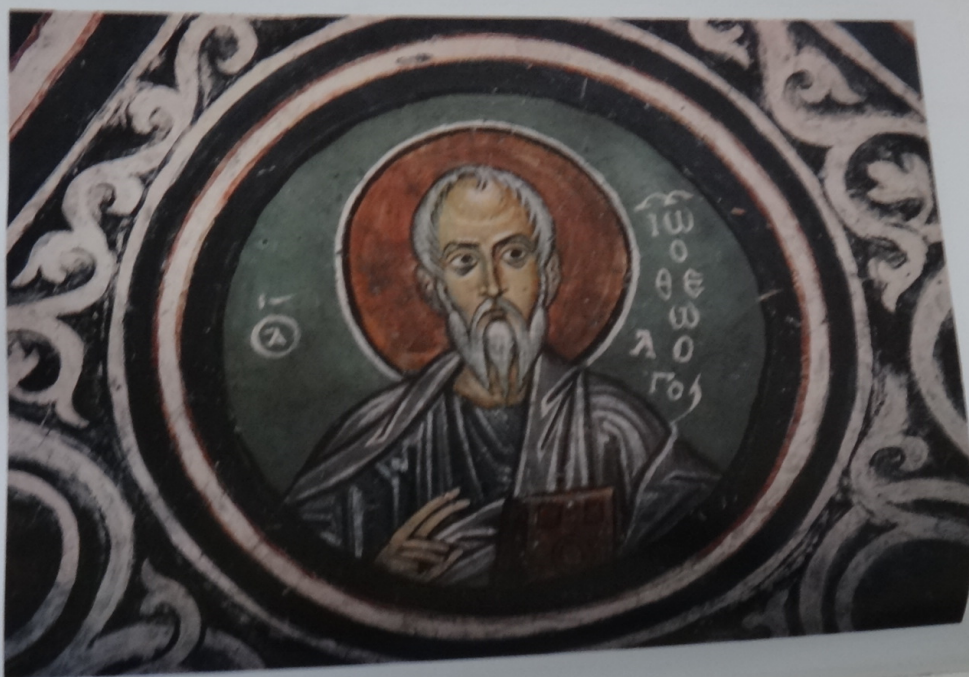


Plate 1. St. John the Theologian (17th c.)



Plate 3. Our Holy Father Loukas (J 1)





Plate 4. Entry into Jerusalem (C. North)

Plate 5. Entry into Jerusalem, detail. St. John or St. Thomas

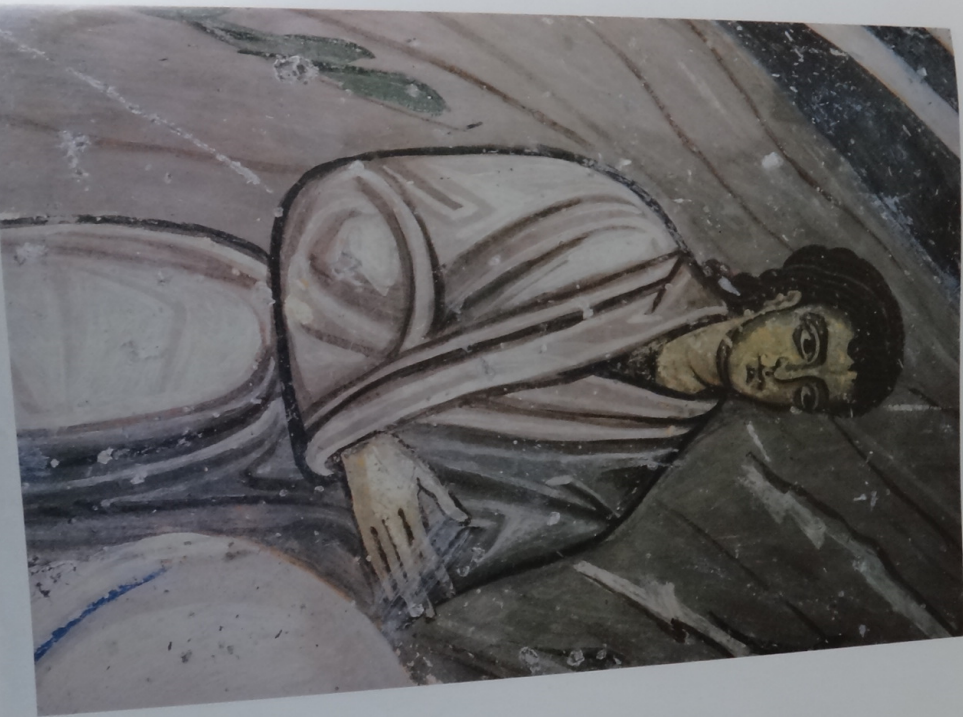




Plate 6. Entry into Jerusalem, detail: Elders





Page 7: Christening (C. Eusebius), detail: St. John



Plate 8. Last Supper (G. South), detail



Plan 9: Descent from the Cross, detail





Plate 10. Burial; The Women at the Tomb (J South)



Figure 1: The Buddha at the Temple of the South, detail.



Plate 12. Incredulity of Thomas (H South)



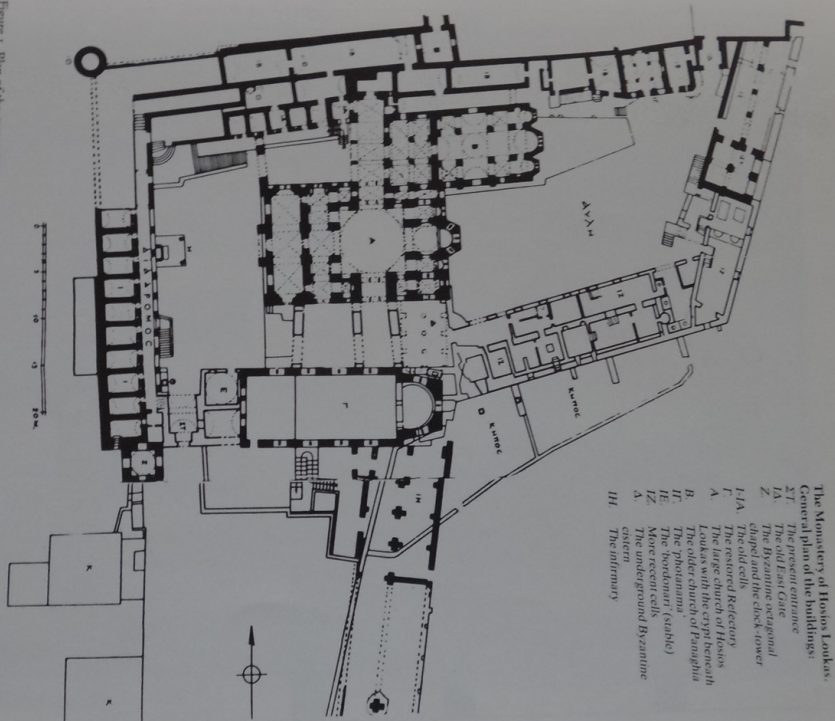


Figure 1. Plan of the monastery

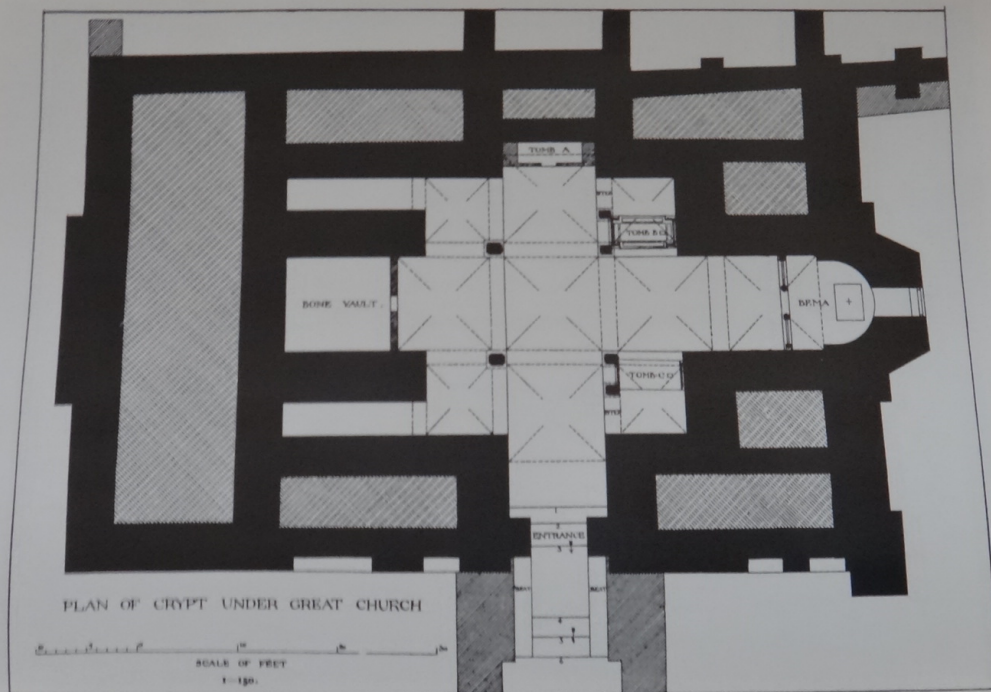


Figure 3. Plan of the crypt



Figure 3. Interior view of the crypt, looking north, with the tomb of Holy Luke





Figure 4. Tomb in the northeast bay



Figure 5. Staircase view with the tomb in the southeast bay and entrance



6

Figure 6. View east showing two tombs and sanctuary

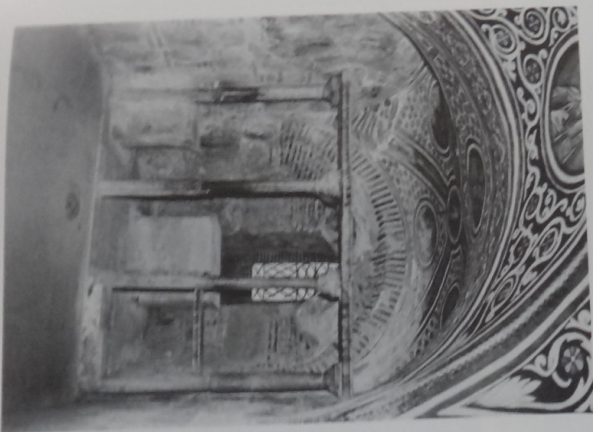


Figure 7. Sanctuary of the crypt with temple barrier, altar, and shelf with prothesis niche



Figure 8. View west with ossuary vaults



Figure 9. Capital on the southern part of the crypt







Figure 11. St. Theodore (B 1)



Figure 12. St. Demetrius (B 2)

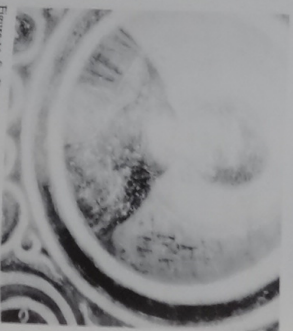


Figure 13. St. Demetrius in infrared photograph



Figure 14. St. George (B 3)



Figure 15. St. Procopius (B 4)





Figure 17. St. Nicetas (E. J.)



Figure 16. St. Nicetas (E. J.)



Figure 18. St. Eusebius (E. J)



Figure 19. St. Eusebius in infrared photograph



Figure 20. St. Mercurius (E. A)



Figure 25. St. Andrew (1.2)



Figure 26. St. Phocas (1.3)





Figure 24. St. Valentinus (l. 4)



Figure 25. St. Ambrose (l. 5)



Figure 35. St. Peter (D 1)



Figure 36. St. John the Theologian (D 2)



Figure 27: St. Bartholomew (D. 3)



Figure 28: St. Paul (D. 4)





Figure 29. St. Mark (F 1)



Figure 30. St. Luke (F 2)



Figure 31. St. Matthew (F 3)



Figure 32. St. Andrew (F 4)

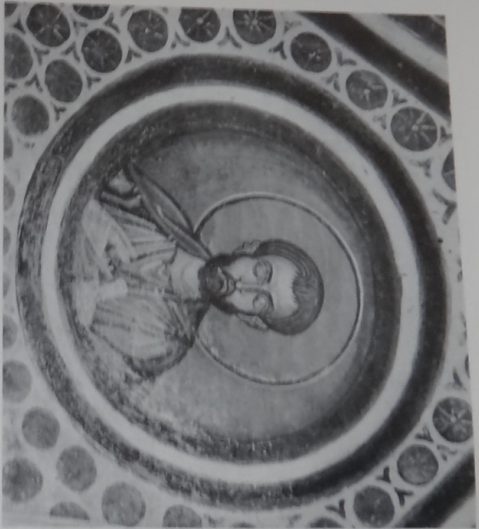


Figure 33. St. James (G 4)



Figure 34. St. Thomas (G 2)



Figure 15. St. Philip (C. 1)



Figure 16. St. Simon (C. 2)





Figure 17. St. Joannikios (A 1)



Figure 18. St. Simeon (A 2)

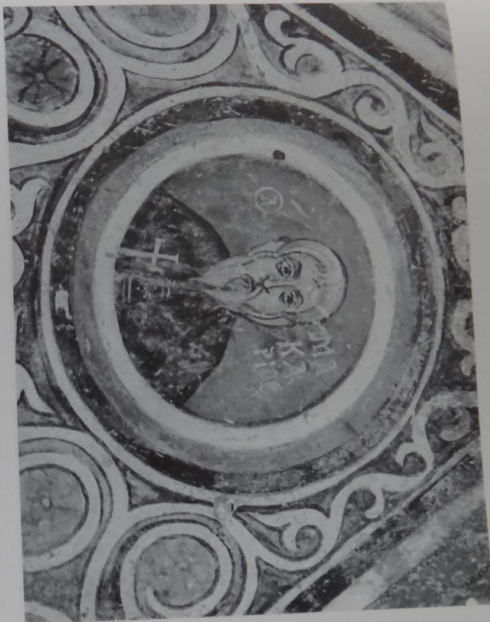


Figure 39. St. Makarios (A. 3)

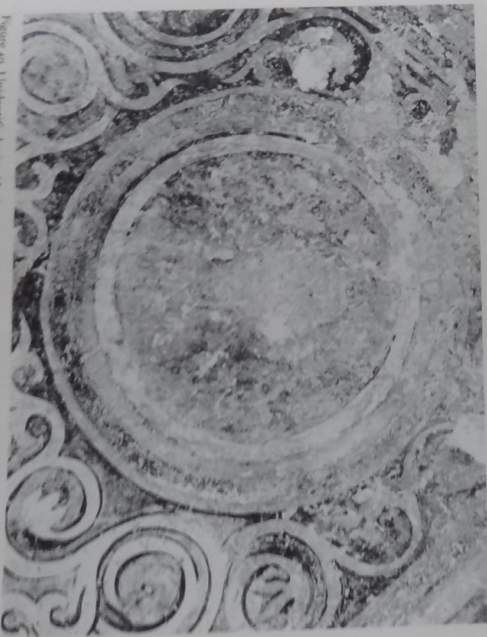


Figure 40. Unidentified saint (A. 4)





Figure 43. St. Abanmus (H 1)

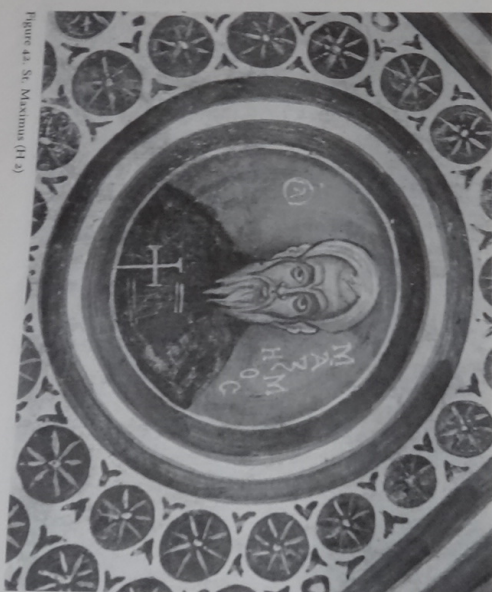


Figure 42. St. Maximus (H 2)



Figure 44. St. Theodosios (14.4)



Figure 45. St. Theodosios (14.5)

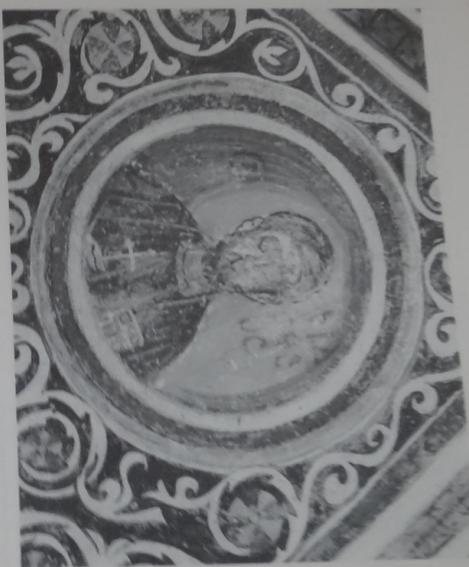


Figure 45. St. Paulinus (C. 3)



Figure 46. St. Paulinus (C. 3)





Figure 47. St. Theodosius (C.1)



Figure 48. St. Athanasius (C.4)

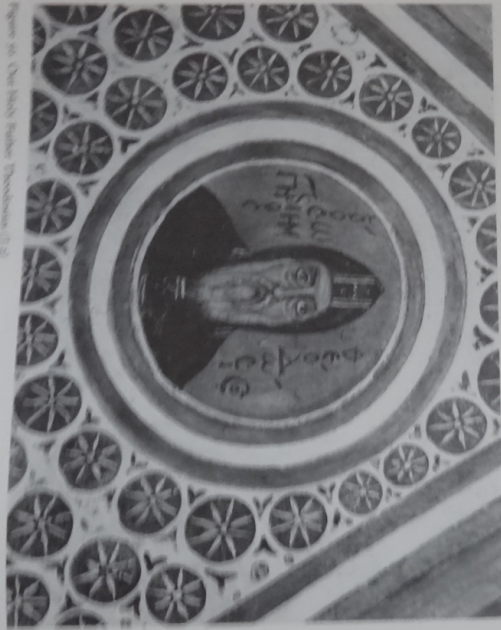


Figure 49. Our Holy Father, Providence (17)



Figure 48. Our Holy Father, Providence (16)

Figure 10. Our Holy Father, Phylarchus (U 4)

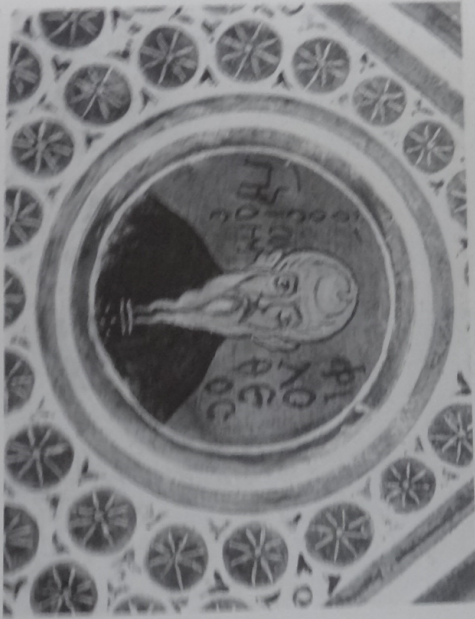


Figure 11. Our Holy Father, Phylarchus (U 5)







Figure 3). Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (C North)



Figure 55. Entry into Jerusalem, detail: Christ



Figure 56. Entry into Jerusalem, detail: elders before the city

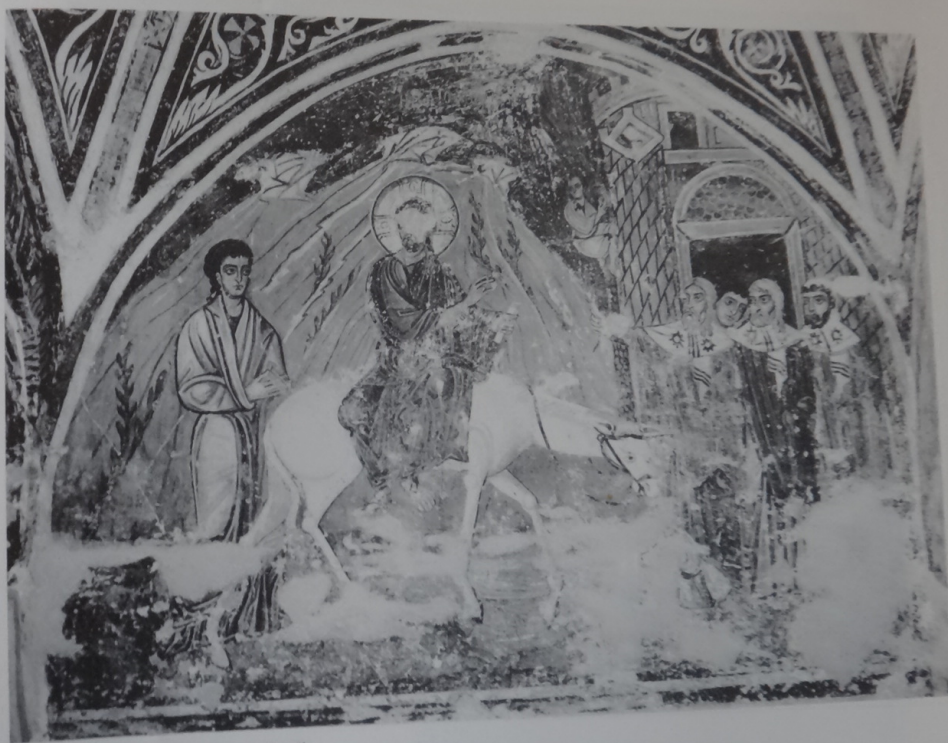


Figure 54. Entry into Jerusalem, detail



Figure 37. Entry into Jerusalem, detail: faces of the elders



Figure 39. The Crucifixion, detail: St. John





Figure 58. The Crucifixion (C East)



Figure 60. Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet (G North)

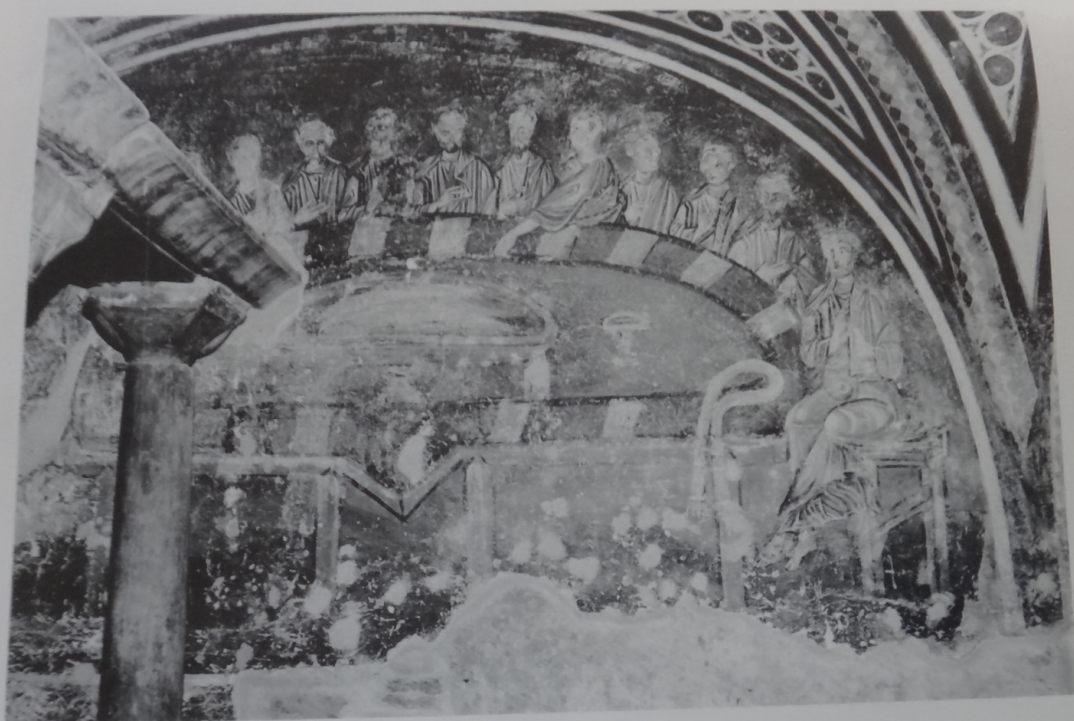


Figure 61. The Last Supper, right portion (G South)





Figure 62. The Last Supper, left portion (G South)



Figure 63. The Last Supper, detail: St. Peter



Figure 64. Christ's Deposition from the Cross (J East)



Figure 65. Deposition from the Cross,  
detail: St. John and an unidentified  
figure

Figure 66. Deposition from the Cross,  
detail







Figure 65. Deposition from the Cross,  
detail: St. John and an unidentified  
figure



Figure 66. Deposition from the Cross,  
detail



Figure 67. Burial of Christ; The Women at the Tomb (J South)

on the Cross,  
identified

on the Cross,



Figure 68. Burial of Christ



Figure 69. Burial of Christ, detail



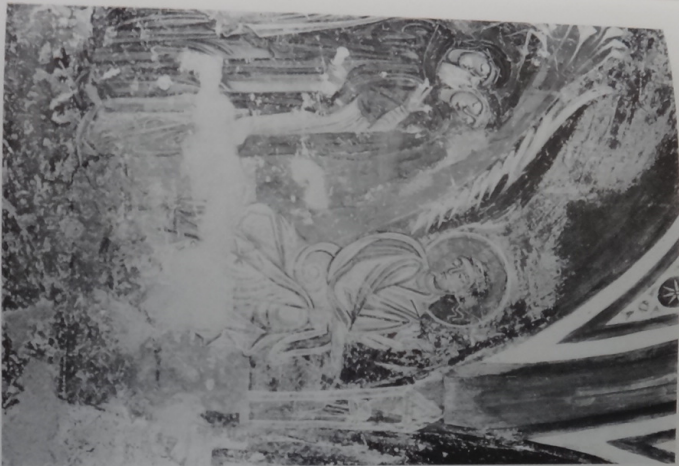


Figure 70. The Women at the Tomb



Figure 71. The Women at the Tomb, detail: the tomb



Figure 72. The Incredulity of Thomas (H South)





Figure 73. Incredulity of Thomas, detail



Figure 74. Incredulity of Thomas, detail





Figure 75. Incredulity of Thomas, detail: disciples



Figure 76. Incredulity of Thomas, detail: disciples



Figure 77. Koimesis of the Virgin

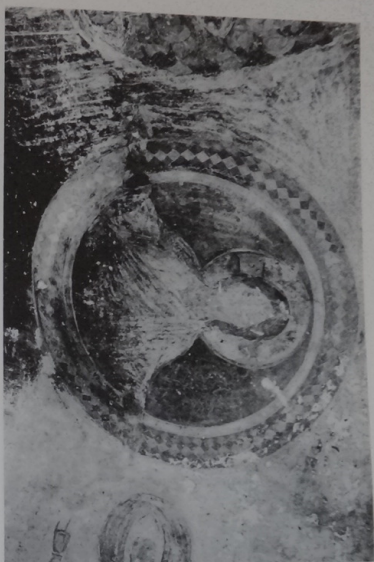


Figure 78. Christ in a Medallion (entrance vault K)



Figure 79. Group of Monks (K West)



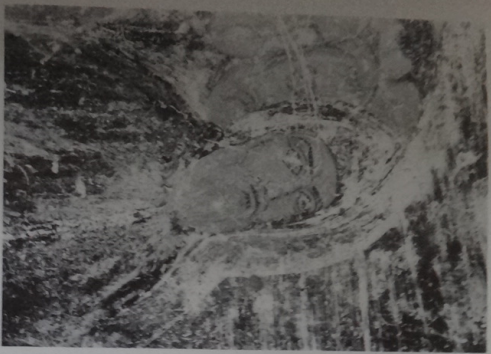


Figure 80. Group of Monks, detail, an abbot

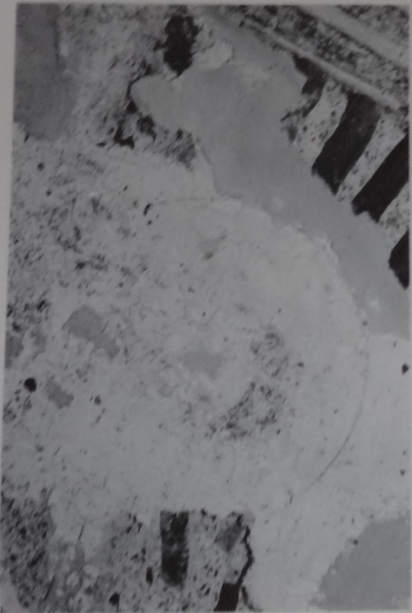


Figure 81. Holy Luke with a Scroll (X East)



Figure K2. Intersession scene (H West)

Figure K3. Apse: last traces of a fresco of the Virgin of the Lilies



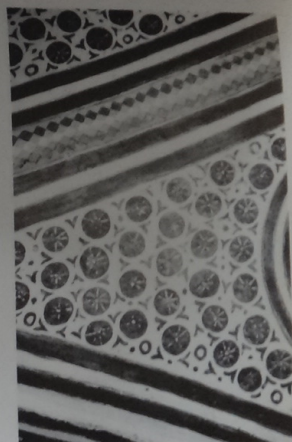


Figure 84. Ornament, Vault E



Figure 85. Ornament, Vault C



Figure 86. Ornament, Vault B  
showing undecorated patch





Figure 87. Cross, apex of Vault E



Figure 88. Hand of God, apex of Vault F

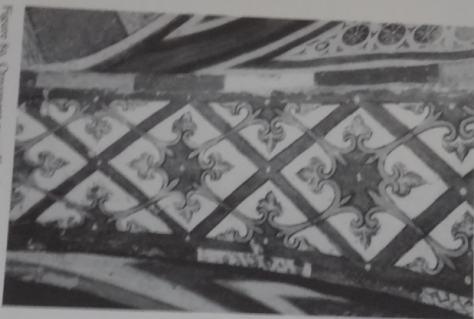


Figure 89. Ornament on soffit of arch



Figure 90. Ornament on soffit of arch



Figure 87. Cross, apex of Vault E



Figure 88. Hand of God, apex of Vault F



Figure 89. Ornament on soffit of arch



Figure 90. Ornament on soffit of arch